

Labor and the Savannah River AEC Project

- I—Manpower and Wages
- II—Unionization and Industrial Relations
- III—Housing and Changes in Population
- IV—Community Facilities and Social Changes

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BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS
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Letter of Transmittal

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR,
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS,
Washington, D. C., September 23, 1952.

The SECRETARY OF LABOR:

I have the honor to transmit herewith a study examining the effect upon the surrounding communities of the construction of the Savannah River atomic energy project in South Carolina.

The study was made in November 1951 and appeared first as a series of four articles in the June, July, August, and September 1952 issues of the *Monthly Labor Review*. The question it attempts to answer is: What is the effect upon manpower, community facilities, and existing relationships when suddenly inundated by a new tributary labor force? It is hoped that the facts presented will helpfully guide appropriate officials when confronted with similar problems in other areas.

The four parts of the present bulletin deal with manpower, wages, and recruitment; unionization and industrial relations; housing and population shifts; and community facilities and social changes.

The study was made by M. Mead Smith of the Bureau's Office of Publications.

EWAN CLAGUE, *Commissioner.*

Hon. MAURICE J. TOBIN,
Secretary of Labor.

(III)

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Labor and the Savannah River AEC Project

Introduction

Announcement late in 1950 by the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) that its largest installation would be constructed near Aiken, S. C., brought considerable speculation and apprehension as to its effect on local institutions and practices, especially regarding business, labor, and community facilities. As the months passed, stories of local dislocation from the so-called "H-bomb plant" were widespread. In an effort to evaluate the extent of such dislocation during the first year following the announcement, the writer in November 1951 interviewed local representatives of labor, business groups, Government, and civic organizations, as well as individual residents. Facts on project practices were obtained from Arthur L. Tackman, assistant manager of AEC's Savannah River Operations Office, and other AEC personnel.

Peak construction activity on the Savannah River Plant (SRP) was still 6 to 8 months off at that time, but the project's effect on local labor conditions appeared to have been less than had been rumored, and later information suggests that the over-all picture did not alter sharply during the months immediately following. Local employment and wage patterns had not changed markedly by November 1951, although building-trades unions had increased their membership, and housing and community facilities were heavily taxed. The concurrent expansion of nearby Camp Gordon contributed substantially to the changes in working and living conditions which had occurred.

The Site and Its Surrounding Communities. AEC's announcement of the SRP on November 28, 1950, noted that the South Carolina location had been selected primarily because it met technical and defense requirements, notably for space. The Commission's decision not to establish a "Government town" also necessitated a site near estab-

lished communities. The 315-square-mile tract, to be sold to the Government and evacuated by mid-1952, was largely woods or cut-over land, sparsely populated; of the 5,000 to 6,000 site residents, some 800 lived in Ellenton or Dunbarton, the only towns located on the site proper. At varying distances of 20 to 30 miles around the project were a number of small South Carolina communities and, across the river in Georgia,¹ Augusta, the area's only relatively large city. Outside Augusta, agriculture predominated, and a very high proportion of the area's population was Negro.

Augusta, population 72,000 in 1950, was already undergoing a rapid business expansion similar to its wartime boom at the time of the SRP announcement, due chiefly to the reactivation of nearby Camp Gordon in mid-1950 as well as to several other Government installations in the city. Though still primarily dependent on farm production, Augusta had a number of industrial concerns and the Chamber of Commerce had long promoted further development; in early 1948, work had begun on Clark Hill Dam near Augusta, first of a projected series of Federally constructed dams on the Savannah River. North Augusta, with some 2,600 residents in 1950, was virtually a suburb of Augusta although located in South Carolina.

Augusta had several large textile mills but the major portion of textile manufacturing, the area's main industry, was located along the Horse Creek Valley in South Carolina between Augusta and Aiken, largest of the South Carolina communities affected. Aiken's main economic activity other than agriculture was serving the "winter resort crowd"—owners of large estates and winter training stables—for which the town had long been well known. In recent years the town had been

¹ The location of bridges across the river at Augusta limited major SRP impact on Georgia communities to Augusta. Construction of an additional bridge below Augusta was under consideration before the project announcement and the subject of continuing controversy, but was not in prospect in November 1951.

slowly "dying on the vine," as many estates were sold or closed; a few leading citizens saw industrialization as the solution for this economic decline and had raised funds shortly before the SRP announcement to bring in some outside industry, but most residents resisted any change which might destroy the traditional atmosphere. Prominent citizens of Barnwell, population 2,000, also favored industrialization, and an industrial corporation had a year or two earlier brought in a small zipper manufacturing company from New York—the town's second manufacturing establishment. The other communities affected—Allendale (population 2,500 in 1950), Blackville (1,300), and Williston (900)—neither had industry nor desired change, although the recent routing of a new highway through Allendale had expanded business there somewhat.

Operation of the Project. Thirty percent of the land for the project had been purchased between January and November 1951 and nearly two-thirds of the remainder had been appraised. Dirt removal had started in February and by November work was going on at a number of widely separated construction areas, each a major construction job in itself. The AEC owned all SRP lands and buildings and set over-all policies, but the design, construction, and operation of the

plant were contracted out to the E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co. Du Pont handled the major portion of the project work directly, but subcontracted certain specialty jobs such as highway and railroad construction, erection of water tanks and powerhouse chimneys. AEC maintained a small staff at the project site to check on costs and standards, to act as liaison between the contractor and Government agencies, and generally to assure that the project progressed according to schedule.

Work on the SRP was divided into two general phases; one hiring schedule covered construction of facilities and another operation of the plant after manufacture of atomic materials got under way. Actually these phases overlapped considerably. A large portion of the production staff ("permanent" workers) was scheduled to be hired by mid-1952, when construction employment ("temporary" workers) was to be at its peak level, and the construction force was scheduled to decline gradually over the following year or two. Further, experience at other AEC installations suggested that, contrary to the general impression among local residents, some construction activity would continue even after the major facilities were completed.

It was against this background that the November 1951 survey was carried out.

I.—Manpower and Wages

Large-scale hiring for the SRP had had remarkably little effect on employment and wage patterns in the area by November 1951. Recruitment had not been too great a problem for the project at that time, but over 60 percent of the workers hired,² including most of the skilled, were from outside the 50-mile "commuting area." Chief local shortage was of qualified clerical workers, and their salary scales had risen during the preceding year. The SRP shared in this shortage which was attributed chiefly to Camp Gordon. Most manual workers in the area were not the type needed on the SRP, and, for those who were, the attraction of somewhat higher wage rates than those paid locally was partially offset by commuting costs and difficulties. As a result, some local construction rates were reported to have risen, but local concerns were only gradually beginning to have difficulty in obtaining needed unskilled labor, chief group recruited locally. Agricultural labor was in short supply and wage rates had risen, but this represented a long-term trend which SRP hiring had merely aggravated.

SRP manpower needs had been successfully met, mainly from the Southeast—only about 30 percent of the workers hired having come from outside South Carolina and Georgia, and less than 20 percent from outside the general South Atlantic region. The reserve of craftsmen available in that region under existing project conditions was generally considered to be near exhaustion, however, and it was anticipated that recruitment of skilled workers must henceforth be Nation-wide. Basic wage rates, unchanged throughout the period under review³ and augmented by only 5 hours of overtime beginning in August, were lower than those in more industrialized sections of the country, and union officials predicted difficulty in attracting the needed labor. Recruitment difficulties might already have been encountered, in some observers' opinion, if construction schedules had not been temporarily slowed beginning in September when design, subject to constant revision

as engineers worked out improvements, "got behind" construction. The reduced hiring rate had varied repercussions not only on hiring programs but also on community problems.

Over-All Project Employment

SRP employment practices were in general Du Pont's "normal commercial practices," with AEC approval required for any deviations from this norm. Under the Davis-Bacon Act, all Federal contractors must pay at least those rates determined by the Secretary of Labor to be prevailing for similar projects in the area. Various other minimum labor standards are also set, such as prohibition of discrimination in employment because of race, creed, color, or national origin; payment of overtime rates for work beyond 8 hours daily; and "anti-kickback" regulations.

Construction hiring did not start until after the Secretary fixed manual wage rates on February 9, 1951, at which time only some 260 AEC and Du Pont supervisory and clerical persons were employed. Hiring proceeded on schedule until the September slowdown noted, when nearly 17,000 workers were on the job. The weekly construction hiring rate then dropped from an August average of over 1,000 to a little over 400 during October. By early November 1951, the force (after separations) had increased only to 17,247, substantially below the 24,000 originally scheduled for October 1951. However, construction employment was still scheduled to reach a peak of 36,000 in the summer of 1952.⁴

Also on the project in November were some 60 to 70 Du Pont operations employees and an AEC staff of about 170. Manning tables called for 3,300 operations and roughly 250 AEC employees at the mid-1952 construction peak. As construction declined, the operations staff would rise gradually to 6,000 in mid-1954, with little change in the AEC force.⁴ Du Pont operations staff are excluded from the following discussion.

Labor turn-over, about the same as on other Du Pont construction jobs, averaged approximately 8 per 100 through October 1951. The rate was fairly uniform throughout the crafts, although

² Exact information on the place of recruitment was not available for the force actually on the job, termination figures not being broken down between local and in-migrant labor.

³ The Secretary of Labor made slight corrections in one or two individual rates which new evidence showed to have been inadvertently set at rates not quite equivalent to those prevailing.

⁴ Schedules were subsequently revised, setting new estimates of 45,500 construction workers in September 1952 and 7,200 production workers in mid-1954.

slightly higher in the lower-paid categories. Separations were highest among workers in their first month or two of employment, dwindling to an almost negligible level after the "shake-down" period, according to project officials. Quitting either to take other jobs or because of wages were the major causes of the more than 7,000 terminations by November 11. Few employees left specifically because of living conditions.

Training programs consisted of an extensive supervisory training program, orientation for all new employees, and some on-the-job training given to office personnel by their supervisors; 107 apprentices were employed, almost entirely in the electrician and ironworker crafts. However, a short-term skill-improvement training program had been worked out, in conjunction with apprenticeship personnel, to meet certain anticipated shortages.

Manual Workers on the Project

Nearly three-fourths of the total force on Du Pont construction payrolls were manual workers (11,441) and gang foremen (1,198), on November 8, 1951. Trades represented were carpenters and laborers (over 3,000 each); ironworkers, teamsters, and operating engineers (over 1,000 each); plumbers and steamfitters, and electricians (over 600 each); bricklayers and cement finishers, boilermakers, sheet-metal workers, and painters (over 100 each). (Hiring of asbestos workers started only in September and few were on the project by November.) Well over two-thirds of the expected peak demand for laborers, teamsters, and operating engineers had already been met; major hiring of other crafts had not yet occurred, and the proportion of skilled workers was scheduled to rise sharply as construction progressed.

These figures include workers employed under subcontracts made specifically for the supplying and supervision of workers in certain crafts, notably the electrical and pipefitting subcontracts. Excluded are the roughly 1,000 workers employed by subcontractors performing specialty construction jobs on an independent basis. The following discussion does not apply to this group, although subcontract provisions required general working conditions in effect comparable to those for Du Pont construction workers.

Wages and Working Conditions. The project pay scale reflected rates prevailing in the "recruiting region," since some heavy construction skills were either not available or few in number in the immediate Aiken-Augusta area, and project work often required more skill than did local work. In most instances, wage rates were therefore somewhat higher than the going local level. The rate for boilermakers, for example, many of whom habitually migrate from one large construction job to another and who are scarce nationally, was that negotiated by the union late in 1950 for the Southeast area as a whole. Other rates, such as that for carpenters, who were available but scarce locally, were determined on the basis of wages in Atlanta, the nearest large city. On the other hand, the rate for common labor, available locally in large numbers, was below union rates in other southeastern cities; it was, however, substantially above going local rates, reflecting the project's extensive need for such workers. Hourly SRP rates ranged from \$2.60 for plumbers and steamfitters to \$0.90 to \$1 for laborers; truck drivers were the only other category receiving less than \$2 an hour.

Hours were 9 a day, 5 days a week, with a few crews working shift or week-end hours, such as on maintenance or when a concrete pour was not finished. Most crafts were paid time and a half for hours over 8 per day or other than the regular shift, but a few received double time. All crafts had at least four established holidays, some having five or six, and most were paid double time for work on holidays. A normal differential was granted for multiple-shift operations and a 20-percent differential for electricians performing certain hazardous work. In contrast to the subsidies for traveling and "isolation" commonly paid workers on construction jobs, the only additional allowance was for asbestos workers. They were to receive the equivalent of bus fare from Columbia, S. C., for their initial and return trips to the project and an out-of-town allowance for each day worked.

The majority of construction workers had not yet been employed long enough to qualify for most of the fringe benefits provided. All workers completing 1 year's service were to receive 2 weeks' paid vacation. Certain benefits were provided over and above regular workmen's compensation

for on-the-job injuries. For nonoccupational sickness or accident, a company-employee-financed group accident and health insurance plan was open to employees after 6 months' service, and a high proportion of those eligible were reported to be covered; to protect against income loss during such periods, a company-paid disability wage plan was available for employees with at least 1 year's service. In September 1951, Du Pont also requested Wage Stabilization Board (WSB) approval for a plan to pay premiums on hospitalization and surgical care for employees with at least 1 year's service, but the request had not yet been acted on in November. Other standard Du Pont programs included life-insurance and pension plans for continuously employed personnel.

Du Pont's safety program was widely regarded as among the finest throughout industry and far superior to most in the less safety-minded construction industry. All workers received a half-day's orientation on safety and security, and in a variety of ways attention was constantly called to safety regulations. Supplementary safety equipment was sold at cost at "cash sales stores." Also on the site were a central dispensary, a cafeteria, and a bank in the administration area, and a small sick bay and food-dispensing unit in each construction area.

Finally, throughout its operations Du Pont emphasized a close personal relationship between the supervisor, carefully selected and trained, and those reporting to him.

Recruitment of the Labor Force. Manual construction labor, including most of the gang foremen, was almost entirely recruited through the American Federation of Labor building-trades unions. During the 2½ months between the SRP announcement and the wage-rate determination, people flocked into Aiken and Augusta from all over the country, drawn by rumors of project wages as high as \$7 an hour. They crowded Employment Service offices in both communities, where they were given Du Pont applications; most left immediately, because no SRP work was available. After hiring started, United States Employment Service project activity was limited mainly to recruitment of nonmanual workers, although the Aiken office supplied a few workers to three of the unions.

With over 90 percent of all building-trades workers belonging to the AFL unions, according to union statistics, recruitment through the unions is customary for almost all large construction jobs. Two exceptions had occurred on the SRP as of November: a few "DP's" from the site, who had priority over all job applicants if qualified, had been employed; in late October, Du Pont had ordered a specified number of workers hired "at the gate" (i. e., without regard to union referral), as a means of satisfying company officials who had no records of union membership that complaints of a closed shop were untrue. Otherwise, so long as the unions could fill the labor "requisitions" carefully worked out each week, the company hired only union-referred workers.

Not all workers referred were actually hired, however. Du Pont's employment office rejected a good many on medical grounds, particularly common laborers, among whom the union reported "a rather bad health condition." Du Pont interviewers rejected others as unqualified for the work or because they failed to meet security requirements.⁵ Some were also separated shortly after employment when X-rays and checks on security and experience claimed became available. Of considerable local interest in October 1951 were Ku Klux Klan charges of discrimination against its members in project employment. AEC spokesmen pointed out that the project did not hire members of organizations listed by the U. S. Attorney General's Office as advocating or approving force and violence to deny others their constitutional rights.

Thirty-nine percent of manual workers hired by mid-October had been recruited from within the so-called commuting radius of 50 miles, with a few additional workers reported to be traveling daily from as far away as 90 to 100 miles. The bulk of these hires were laborers and truck drivers, groups which were almost completely local recruits. As the project needs were large for both categories of men, and neither union concerned had offices in the area when the project was announced, the laborers' union set up a council in Aiken, composed of three locals from other

⁵ Noncritical workers were hired after an interview and fingerprinting, with a subsequent Du Pont check of police records and/or FBI file check; personnel who would have access to restricted material had a full preemployment FBI investigation.

parts of South Carolina and Georgia, and the teamsters' international chartered a new local.

The laborers' council reported extensive recruitment efforts in rural areas around the project, including attempts to make transportation facilities available for groups of potential construction laborers. Both organizations recruited some workers through the Aiken public employment office. The commuting problem was particularly significant for these low-paid workers. Many did not have cars, preferred by most SRP workers since local buses did not take them as close to their particular work areas. In any case, the cost of bus or car-pool transportation substantially cut down any differential in the take-home pay between local and project employment. The time involved and frequent accidents on highways overcrowded at rush hours were also recruitment handicaps. Some local sources labeled as additional deterrents such factors as union membership fees and the informal, personal relationship between local employers and their common labor in contrast to the strange and highly organized conditions on the construction project.

Only a small proportion of workers in other trades were obtained from the limited local supply. Union recruitment arrangements reflected the variation between crafts in local availability as well as in number and level of skill required and existing local organization. The plumbers, electricians, bricklayers, carpenters, and painters already had locals in the area, which handled project needs; for pipefitters, relatively hard to find and managed on the project by the pipefitting subcontractor, the plumbers international set up a special office in the Augusta local. The ironworkers also established an office in the SRP area, and the operating engineers inaugurated a new branch of the South Carolina local. Both the boilermakers and the sheet-metal workers recruited through locals elsewhere in the region. Some unions, such as the sheet-metal workers and bricklayers, had been able to meet SRP needs with workers who came to the local on their own initiative, whereas the boilermakers, for example, had already had to "scour the country" to locate workers with the highly specialized experience required. Ironworkers were the one group for which recruitment needs had been "filled more slowly" as of November.

The readily available common labor in the area was generally believed to have been absorbed by November, and a teamsters' spokesman said that experienced truck drivers could no longer be obtained at project wages. Intensive recruitment would yield the additional common labor needed, according to most local authorities. Both unions, however, urged a wage increase as essential to further recruitment, citing also increased cost of living and higher rates on other AEC installations. Further, a number of union spokesmen attributed the lack of craft shortage thus far to the season. They pointed out that, as SRP labor needs rose in the spring and summer of 1952, construction activity would be resumed in the more industrialized sections of the country and the southern climate would no longer be an attraction. The relative length of SRP employment was advantageous, but the ironworkers, for example, said that it was already difficult to keep people on the job because of the low SRP rates and take-home pay. Increasing difficulties in both recruitment and retention of workers were predicted if project pay remained unchanged.

Only one or two unions were reported to be negotiating for increased pay at that time,⁶ but one union representative expected that an SRP wage raise would follow renegotiation of their area contract in the spring, when most construction agreements are negotiated. Any SRP increase would be subject to both AEC approval and Wage Stabilization Board regulations. Should the area rate approved by the Board for nonproject work rise, this could be the basis for revision of an SRP rate; otherwise, an individual ruling by the WSB would be required, because the SRP had no base date for computing allowable percentage increases. Any application for wage adjustment filed on grounds of manpower shortage in an essential defense activity would require certification by other Government agencies that a concerted program had been undertaken to remedy the shortage and that the wage adjustment was an important part of the over-all effort to attract and retain labor.

While wage increases were not anticipated in the near future, an extension of the workweek was

⁶ Stabilization officials approved increases for ironworkers and teamsters in January and February 1952. A number of other increases were approved at the end of April, including 10- and 15-cent raises for laborers.

rumored locally.⁷ Inauguration of overtime in August had been expected not only to help meet immediate construction schedules but also, through the increased take-home pay, to attract additional workers and to cut down turn-over. The abnormal hiring situation beginning in September made it difficult to assess the effect of overtime on either recruitment or quits.

Nonmanual Project Workers

Du Pont employed 5,012 nonmanual workers on November 8, including general foremen and craft and area superintendents; all AEC personnel were nonmanual. Of the Du Pont total roughly 40 percent were clerical workers and nearly 20 percent were on patrol and fire-fighting duties; a large proportion of the AEC staff was also clerical. Most professional and a few clerical workers had been brought from other Du Pont and AEC installations; the others were recruited through the Employment Service, contacts with universities, and similar sources. Approximately a third of the Du Pont and a good many AEC workers had come from within the commuting area.

Both AEC and Du Pont had encountered serious continuing shortages of engineers and certain other professional workers who were in short supply nationally. For a time AEC had some difficulty in obtaining qualified clerical workers, also scarce both locally and nationally. Minimum qualifications were too high for a large proportion of the local applicants, and some failed to send in security forms or took other jobs before the FBI investigation was completed. However, AEC personnel received salaries equivalent to Federal pay scales, were not affected by the "temporary" and "permanent" phases of the project schedule, and worked a straight 5-day 40-hour week. By November 1951, present and future clerical needs were largely met, and quits were few.

In contrast, Du Pont continued to be unable to recruit sufficient clerical and custodial workers. Du Pont salaries were those prevailing in the area, and hours and other working conditions were the same as for other Du Pont employees. Recruitment difficulties were attributed chiefly to competition from other Government installations in the area, principally Camp Gordon, which

paid Federal rates and did not require lengthy commuting. Du Pont in the early fall reduced its employment specifications somewhat—raising the age limit for guards and accepting less-skilled typists and stenographers than formerly. On grounds of inequity with Camp Gordon wages, the company also obtained WSB authorization to change the rates for certain categories. The new schedule was put into effect the latter part of November.

Employment of Negroes

Twenty percent of Du Pont's construction force in early November 1951 were Negro workers (3,369), but 91 percent of them were common laborers, customarily colored, in this area. Aside from a handful of nonmanual employees, the other 9 percent were employed as truck drivers, cement finishers (also traditionally colored there), and carpenters—including 27 Negro gang foremen, for laborer, cement finisher, and carpenter crews.

Du Pont had employed no colored clerical workers, and most of the few nonmanual workers cited were employed as matrons. None of the AEC staff was Negro. AEC had interviewed colored as well as white applicants for clerical positions, but, as with local applicants generally, very few were able to pass the standard tests given, and the few who did either failed to complete the security check or took other jobs before it was completed.

Both the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the National Urban League (NUL) charged racial discrimination in project hiring. They pointed out the project's lack of Negro white-collar workers, recruited directly by both AEC and Du Pont, and asserted that the unions had "under-referred" colored carpenters, truck drivers, and other skilled workers as helpers. According to project officials, Du Pont had advised union representatives that referrals would be processed without regard to color. Referring to this policy, speakers at an NAACP-sponsored meeting in Aiken, in September 1951, charged Du Pont and an unidentified Augusta union with "passing the buck" between them and said that the NAACP had enough affidavits and other evidence of discrimination in skilled employment to warrant going to court. (Klan spokesmen, who had from time to time pro-

⁷ Establishment of a 6-day, 54-hour week was announced in late March 1952.

tested the announced project nondiscrimination policy, promptly praised the union's "white members only" policy.)

The question of segregation was also raised by all of these organizations. Du Pont policy is to follow local custom in this matter on its construction jobs, but segregated eating facilities, wash rooms, etc., were prohibited by AEC instructions and none existed on the SRP. The issue was not brought into the open on the project itself, in view of the limited colored nonmanual staff and a certain amount of tacit "self-segregation."

AEC headquarters in Washington held numerous conferences during 1951 with the home offices of AEC contractors on compliance with the nondiscrimination clause in Federal contracts.⁸ In October, a personnel officer was assigned to help place qualified Negroes in AEC and contractor jobs on a program-wide basis, but the AEC had not yet issued instructions for carrying out this assignment.

Effect on the Local Labor Market

Before the SRP wage determination, grave concern was voiced over the local effect of SRP wage-manpower policies by manufacturers, farmers, officials responsible for State highway construction, and similar groups, in North Carolina as well as in the two States directly affected. Reasons underlying this concern were that high wages would draw off qualified local workers and force up local rates, yet low wages would make it impossible to attract any but local people; recruitment mainly from outside the area would cut down disruption of local industry but place an added burden on community facilities.

Local comment on wages died down after the wage scale announcement, and greater emphasis seemed to be placed on the question of future SRP wage adjustments, either to attract labor or because of union demands, than on existing policies. Local officials (other than labor) varied in their evaluation of project rates, but the secretary of the Augusta Chamber of Commerce, for example, said that they were "not exorbitant." Further, Du Pont officials met from time to time with leading local manufacturers, assuring them that labor "pirating" would be avoided (although local

labor was to be used where possible in order to minimize housing needs). They also explained in advance such SRP policies as the August extension of the workday. In September, the newly created Southern Regional WSB referred publicly to the Du Pont proposal for a nonmanual wage change and was sharply criticized by the Governor of South Carolina for any consideration of a wage increase on the project. Immediately, the Board clarified the proposal as applying only to a few clerical and custodial workers.

Local evaluation of project manpower policies also reflected the varying viewpoints on the long-run development of the area. Leading citizens in both Augusta and Barnwell hoped that the availability of a skilled labor force as project construction declined would attract new industry. The Augusta Chamber of Commerce was already approaching northern firms who might be interested in the combination of skilled labor and power from the Clark Hill powerhouse, currently under construction. Several firms were already planning to establish plants in Augusta, according to the Chamber secretary, which would also help to cushion the effect of the decline in SRP construction activity on the local labor market.

Precise information on wage changes during the period under review is extremely fragmentary. In announcing that one of its first tasks would be to investigate the wage-manpower situation in the SRP area, the regional WSB cited many requests for permission to increase wages there as well as widespread rumors of labor pirating and irregular wage increases. No further details were released, however. The Southern Regional Office of the Bureau of Labor Statistics surveyed wages and supplementary benefits in the Augusta-Aiken metropolitan area in November 1951. The study did not cover trend, and construction was excluded; but the figures give some idea of the relationship between SRP wages and those paid local office and maintenance workers.

Clerical Workers and Common Labor. Shortage of competent clerical workers was not new to the SRP area, as Government projects paying civil-service rates had competed for qualified office personnel since the beginning of World War II. On the Augusta side of the SRP, current expansion of these projects was more important in the clerical

⁸ In December, President Truman created a new top-level committee to police compliance with this clause by all Federal contractors.

scarcity than the relatively unattractive Du Pont jobs or the small volume of AEC employment which, though paid at the Government rates, involved commuting. Wives of some project engineers and administrative employees took local stenographic jobs, but such additions were few. For such communities as Barnwell, however, located on the other side of the project from Augusta, the shortage was directly attributable to the SRP. Since project standards for stenographic and other top brackets eliminated most of the local girls, those hired represented virtually all the qualified workers available. Lower-grade clerical workers were plentiful, turned out "a dime a dozen" by the schools, according to a local source.

Salary scales in private industry rose during 1951 in response to the shortage, and standards were reduced. The monthly minimum beginning salary for stenographers, as evidenced by orders to public employment offices, was \$160 in September 1951 compared with \$145 on May 1, and employers were generally willing to pay more than the minimum. By November, straight-time weekly salaries for stenographers averaged \$44 a week, according to the BLS survey; salaries for women office workers in establishments studied ranged from \$30.50 for routine file clerks to \$56 for secretaries. Du Pont salary scales were \$39 to \$46 weekly for stenographers and \$34.50 for clerk-typists.

Project reliance on the local labor market for unskilled labor had caused nonagricultural employers only relatively minor difficulties in obtaining common labor by November, and the going hourly rates of 75 to 82 cents had not changed markedly, according to various sources. Further additions could only be at the expense of local employers, however, and one Augusta brick manufacturing company was already beginning to hire colored women as common laborers—the alternative to raising wages—as had been done during the war. If this proved successful, the expectation was that the practice might eventually spread. Such workers were plentiful and, though the work was dirty, heavy, and in some instances hot, the pay was the top common labor rate of 82 cents hourly and better than the \$12 to \$15 a week paid to domestic servants.

Recruitment from the rural sections had more

seriously affected the farm labor supply. Shortages of cotton pickers during the fall of 1951 were widely reported and wages, which customarily rise during the picking season, reached the top 1950 rate early in the season and subsequently attained a new high. An adequate supply of workers was attracted by the increased rates in Georgia. In South Carolina, from which the project had drawn more labor than from the rural sections of Georgia beyond Augusta, the situation varied; one big cotton planter, for example, indicated no particular difficulty, yet a small farmer in an outlying county said that cotton had been left in the fields for lack of pickers. Most authorities agreed, however, that the project had merely speeded up a long-term decline in the farm-labor supply and hastened the process of mechanization and diversification of farming.

Skilled Construction Workers. Only isolated instances of difficulties in the maintenance field were reported for the building trades. The unexpectedly minor influence of the project on the local construction industry was attributed partly to the supplying of SRP craft needs largely from outside the area, but more important was the coincidence of project construction with a slump in local construction activity. Building had picked up sharply with the reactivation of Camp Gordon and the SRP announcement shortly thereafter. But by the time substantial numbers of workers were being hired on the project, building had slumped: Federal Reserve Board support had been removed from Government bonds and almost no mortgage money was available. Thus, craftsmen drawn to the project probably would have been unemployed, according to local observers.

Actually, the small local supply of craft labor was augmented by workers attracted to the area but unable to meet Du Pont's exacting standards. Several of the unions indicated that they placed a good number of Du Pont rejects locally. One union, with special arrangements for project recruitment, tried to get qualified men for local contractors as well. Also, during the fall cut-back in project hiring, some skilled workers continued to arrive for whom project jobs were not immediately available. Barnwell authorities also noted that a good number of craftsmen had come into town with the express purpose of taking local construc-

tion jobs, which they expected would expand because of the project.

Financing was still not available in November for the residential construction planned to meet the growing housing needs of both the SRP and Camp Gordon. However, local contractors expected that the new defense housing legislation, not yet in effect, would ease this situation, and that competition for skilled labor would then be considerable. Even then, observers doubted that local contractors would be worse off with regard to labor supply than before the project. The fringe of craft labor unacceptable to Du Pont would, if anything, increase as recruitment rose; and local workers might quit the project for nonproject jobs, more desirable in the long run, if wages were at all comparable when such work became available.

Craft wage rates had shown a slow but definite upward trend by November. In some instances they matched the Du Pont scale. For example, the Construction Industry Stabilization Commission approved a rate for sheet-metal workers in Augusta equivalent to the SRP rate, effective in late August 1951. (A union spokesman reported that of the few Augusta men in this craft who had taken SRP jobs, practically all had returned to the local shops by November.) In September 1951, one of the major local manufacturers was also authorized to pay bricklayers the same rate as that on the project.

But in general rates for local construction work were reportedly still below the SRP scale, and for maintenance work (customarily lower than for construction), well below those on the project. Straight-time hourly earnings of maintenance and power-plant employees surveyed by the BLS in November ranged from \$0.94 for helpers to \$1.59 for automotive mechanics, with carpenters, electricians, machinists, and painters all averaging less than \$1.50 in manufacturing establishments. Rates for truck drivers, largely recruited locally, were somewhat closer to the project scale; those covered by the survey received an average of 84 to 97 cents hourly; and the business agent for the new teamsters' local in Aiken said that, as far as he knew, truck drivers were receiving \$0.75 in the area prior to the project.

Other Occupations. Textile concerns had reportedly lost a few mechanics to the project, but otherwise had been little affected. Most of the textile

workers were women, with unsuitable experience for project employment, particularly during the construction phase, but local people doubted that they would be drawn to the project in any case. The major textile mills, in operation for many years, provided company-built low-rental housing and many of the families had lived there for generations. (The Horse Creek Valley road was a series of company towns, with practically all commercial and community facilities, as well as houses, company-built.) Frequently several members of the family worked in the mills, with family income as a whole relatively high.

Other manufacturing establishments in the area were relatively little affected, except for the increasing difficulty in obtaining common labor and some tendency by employers to avoid lay-offs, regardless of season, in order to hold workers. Women made up the bulk of the force in Augusta's largest food-processing concern, for example, and in the Barnwell zipper plant, which was operating below capacity anyhow during much of this period. The sawmills in Barnwell reportedly lost some labor but were not seriously affected since sawmill operations are flexible.

Retail establishments were experiencing little labor supply difficulty in spite of rapidly expanding business. In Augusta, many servicemen's wives wanted to work; since training at the Camp lasted only 3 to 5 months, jobs as salesgirls were among the few open to them. Wives of project workers also augmented the labor supply for these jobs, particularly in Aiken and to some extent in Barnwell. In the latter community, however, a good many stores were small family-run concerns, and women workers were already plentiful for the others.

Some wives of project personnel also took jobs in other fields. For example, one or two nurses took jobs in Augusta in the public health field, and several waitresses worked in one of the Aiken hotels.

Cost of Living

Local opinion on cost-of-living changes during the period under review varied widely depending on the individual's own particular status and experience, and no figures are available to bear out any of these views. Agreement was almost universal among people interviewed that rents had risen sharply, posing serious problems for workers

coming into the area as well as for some local families. Workers generally said that other prices too were high, although local residents tended to believe no greater price rise had occurred there than elsewhere in the country.

Rents had been decontrolled throughout the region by early 1950. Vacant rental units in Augusta began to fill up rapidly after Camp Gordon was reactivated and people began to offer rooms and apartments for rent for the first time in both Aiken and Augusta. Stories of high rents were soon widespread, and rent control was reactivated in the area on September 20, 1951, with a scheduled roll-back to July 1, 1950.

All types of rental housing were covered by the controls, new units, trailers, boarding houses, etc., and the first problem was registration. The original September deadline was twice delayed, to November 4. As of mid-November, some rents had been rolled back but the large-scale opening of rental units after the July 1950 base date sharply reduced the significance of the regulations. In addition, the need to encourage people to open up rooms placed considerable pressure on rent control authorities in the area toward liberality in "hardship" cases. Augusta realtors warned that rent curbs might cut construction of new housing units, and individuals taking roomers for the first time said that controls would "do more harm than good." Even two Augusta office workers whose rent had been rolled back commented that they had not requested the reduction, and one "didn't even think it was justified."

Yet charges of rent "gouging" continued to be prevalent in November, particularly on the newly opened rental units in which many of the SRP workers lived. Instances were also cited, however, of local families who had lived in a particular house for years and whose rent had been raised sharply following the SRP announcement. Frequently complaints were based on the bad condition of units as well as the high rentals. One double room, for example, rented at \$85 a month, and the bathroom was shared by a third roomer who had to go through the room to reach it.

Reports on price changes were more conflicting. In June when the regional Office of Price Stabilization opened temporary offices in Augusta, a press account said that consumers reported prices spiraling upward daily in Augusta, commercial

center of the area. At the same time, it quoted Augusta businessmen to the effect that the demands of expanding population had kept turnover of stocks "normal" and prevented them from being as high as elsewhere in the country following the post-Korean build-up, but that inventories still were higher than usual. Union representatives interviewed in November, both long-time Augusta residents and those who were new to the area, were vehement in their comments on how prices as well as rents had risen.

Complicating any evaluation of the direct effect of the project on prices was the tendency of immigrants to compare conditions in the area with those "back home." Many complaints about high rents came from workers who had moved from relatively low-rent areas. For example, a project compressor operator and his wife were regarded as "lucky" to have a 2-room-and-private-bath apartment, but in Missouri, where he had worked for a dry-cleaning firm, they had a roomy duplex at less rent. The large proportion of SRP workers from rural areas in South Carolina and Georgia probably also found local prices higher than those in their own small communities, according to observers, and changes in living patterns of former agricultural workers would make expenses seem correspondingly greater. An unknown number of the SRP workers were, however, "week-end commuters" and continued to buy largely in their home towns, some distance from the project.

Yet several people said that prices were higher than in New York, for example. The wife of a project construction supervisor found food and rent both high—food more so than in New York, but rents "not bad" comparatively—although laundry work was extremely cheap and quite good, and domestic service cost less than half what she had paid in New York. Several residents explained that, in Aiken, high prices and rents resulted, not from the SRP, but from Aiken's being a tourist town. Rents were traditionally set at levels adjusted to only about 4 months' occupancy during the year, and beauty shops, for example, customarily charged a higher fee to tourists than to residents. In Augusta, several residents were convinced that prices had gone up no more than elsewhere, one even saying that she was able to live on the same amount as before the project started.

II.—Unionization and Industrial Relations

Major trade-union gains in the Aiken-Augusta area during the initial construction work on the Savannah River Plant (SRP) were among local common laborers and truck drivers. Previously these men had been almost completely nonunion; the change resulted from project hiring through the American Federation of Labor building-trades unions. Craft unions already established in Augusta before the project's start had added some new members, but a good many of the in-migrant SRP workers retained membership in locals outside the area. Whether the new members, either local or from outside the area, represent permanent additions to the local labor movement will depend, however, on factors such as union officials' success in demonstrating the advantages of union membership to newly organized workers with little understanding of union functions; the establishment, by unions setting up new units in the area, of firm relations with local employers at the same time as the manning of the project (a function which chiefly preoccupied union officials in November 1951); and availability of construction or maintenance jobs, after major SRP construction is completed, for either local workers new to construction jobs or in-migrant members of local unions. Trade-union organization had not spread to workers in other industries at the time of this study, as some local residents feared it would eventually do, although organization of a union in Barnwell was attempted for the first time in the spring of 1951.

Widespread publicity and intense local interest centered on SRP labor relations in the fall of 1951. On the basis of an incognito visit to the project site, Congressman W. M. Wheeler from Georgia in September charged that SRP construction jobs could be obtained only through "labor racketeers," who imposed exorbitant fees for a "worker's permit" and withdrew union cards already issued to workers and "sold" them to others. An October series of articles in the *New York Journal-American* (reprinted by the two Augusta papers) reported the situation in similar terms, stated that union initiation fees had been raised in

recent weeks, and described as union "kick-backs" such items as dues paid into the union's operating fund and employer contributions to pension funds. Early in November, a subcommittee of the House Education and Labor Committee held a week's public hearings in Augusta on SRP employment practices in the light of the Taft-Hartley Act closed-shop prohibition, the question of union "rackets," and similar matters on which complaints had been received. Facts brought out at the hearings, at which both the unions and the company denied the validity of the complaints against them, clarified the policies and operations described throughout this article.

Meanwhile the SRP's almost unbroken record of industrial peace was virtually unnoticed. The only strike which had occurred at the time of this survey was a 1½ day walk-out of electricians in early October.

Project Labor-Management Relations

Du Pont followed its customary policy for construction jobs of recruiting both skilled and unskilled workers through the building-trades unions—the most expeditious means of obtaining skilled construction labor, since most crafts are highly organized. In November 1951, 12 of the 19 internationals affiliated with the AFL Building Trades Department were represented on the SRP,⁹ and the vast majority of project workers were members. Several unions referred workers to the project who were neither members nor applicants for membership, in the expectation of later convincing them to join. Almost all such workers did so, but some membership applicants, particularly laborers, did not complete payment of initiation fees or "pick up their cards."

The International Association of Machinists (IAM), which reaffiliated with the AFL in Jan-

⁹ The International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders, and Helpers of America; the Sheet Metal Workers' International Association; the International Association of Bridge, Structural, and Ornamental Iron Workers; the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America; the Bricklayers, Masons, and Plasterers International Union of America; the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry; the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; the Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators, and Paperhangers of America; the International Union of Operating Engineers; the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Warehousemen, and Helpers of America; the International Hod Carriers', Building and Common Laborers' Union of America; and the International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators and Asbestos Workers.

uary 1951 but was not a member of the Building Trades Department, also had a few members on the project, employed in the machine shop.

Role of AEC. Within the framework of general AEC policy, Du Pont had handled its labor relations on the SRP with substantial independence as of November 1951. AEC exercises an over-all supervisory role on its various installations, based on its control of contractor labor expenditures and its general responsibility for carrying out the atomic energy program. The Commission also retains final authority over all security matters, which in the past have sometimes complicated organizational questions. AEC security policies are currently spelled out in such a way as not only to safeguard security (in preventing a political strike or other organized sabotage as well as protecting confidential information) but also to protect the rights of both labor and management under the Labor Management Relations Act: provision is made for assurance that information will not be withheld in National Labor Relations Board cases on grounds of security if it can be supplied in unclassified form, and for assistance where a decision may turn on data which are available only in classified form.¹⁰

AEC staff at a given project site exercise their broad supervisory responsibilities in a variety of ways. For example, they assure that changes in employment conditions proposed on the basis of area practices are those actually prevailing in the area or having other substantial foundation; encourage application of practices and procedures which have proved most successful in maintaining sound and stable labor relations; carry out any AEC responsibility placed upon the agency under existing labor laws; and so on.

AEC also encourages construction contractors and union officials to settle jurisdictional disputes in accordance with the rules and regulations of the National Joint Board for the Settlement of Jurisdictional Disputes in the Building and Construction Industry (established in early 1948) and to resolve other labor disputes or grievances whenever possible at the local level. Utilization of Federal agencies authorized to assist in the

settlement of labor disputes, such as the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service or the Wage Stabilization Board, is facilitated by AEC whenever necessary. If collective bargaining and normal processes of conciliation have failed to resolve a dispute, it may be referred to the Atomic Energy Labor Relations Panel¹¹ as a last resort, at the request of either party or AEC. Appointed by the President in 1949 to prevent any work stoppages which might threaten a vital part of the atomic energy program, the "Davis Panel" attempts to mediate, but may make formal recommendations if further negotiations between the parties fail. Panel procedures are "designed to safeguard continuity of operations while not inhibiting free collective bargaining between AEC contractors and unions."

On AEC manufacturing operations, the unions and contractors are bound to submit an unresolved dispute to the Panel before resorting to either strike or lock-out. In an exchange of letters with the AEC in 1949, both groups agreed that, if such a dispute occurred, operations would be continued under existing employment conditions without interruption until the Panel took jurisdiction and so long as the Panel retained jurisdiction, and for an additional 30 days if the dispute remained unsettled and the Panel made final recommendations (the no-stoppage obligation ceases if the Panel does not take jurisdiction). Construction contractors did not participate in the exchange of letters, and construction activities accordingly are not currently covered by the no-strike no-lock-out pledge, although the Panel has increasingly been called on to help settle construction disputes. Following a series of "wildcat" strikes on one or two important AEC construction projects in the fall of 1951, the president of the AFL Building Trades Department proposed a meeting to work out an over-all policy to eliminate construction work stoppages on AEC projects during the current national emergency. "While present disputes appear to be solely between AEC contractors and unions," he said, "we believe that the underlying cause stems directly from a lack of an equitable, uniform labor policy of the AEC."

Both the AFL and the CIO, as well as outside

¹⁰ These policies are set forth in Bulletin GM-187, Security Policies and Practices in the Area of Labor Relations, issued May 8, 1951, which covers, for example, circumstances under which AEC project managers may authorize investigation for security clearance of union officials, or Federal conciliators and arbitrators.

¹¹ For a description of the Panel, see *Monthly Labor Review*, June 1949 (p. 661).

authorities,¹² have pointed out the anomaly of AEC's stated wish to leave labor matters in the hands of its contractors insofar as possible with the simultaneous requirement that AEC approve labor costs and the necessity for avoiding stoppages which would impede the vital atomic energy program. The federations have called for an AEC policy covering wages and working conditions under which the workers, having relinquished certain bargaining rights in the interests of national security, could look to the Commission to supply the deficiency in their bargaining power. (The CIO has further urged that a TVA-type operation, with direct collective bargaining between the Government agency and the unions, replace the current system of contracting to private corporations; this practice in their opinion strengthens the latter's "already monopolistic position," as well as results in "bad labor policies.") Establishment of the Davis Panel and clarification of security policies represent the major formalized steps taken to date to establish a clear-cut framework of Commission policy within which unions and contractors can bargain with "minimum interference with the traditional rights of American labor and management."

In the construction of the SRP, only routine AEC action in labor relations matters had been required as of November 1951. No NLRB elections had been requested;¹³ no dispute had required outside assistance, either from Federal mediation authorities or the Davis Panel, for settlement; and no wage increases had been negotiated.

Management Policy. Industrial relations practices on the SRP were in general the "normal commercial practices" of Du Pont and the various subcontractors. Du Pont signed no formal collective-bargaining agreements with the unions. As described in Part I—Manpower and Wages, on page 3, the initial wage scale was predetermined by the Secretary of Labor. The Du Pont company extended to SRP employees certain vacation and other benefits provided throughout its organization but not prevalent in the construction industry. Company officials met with

representatives of the building-trades unions in the SRP area, shortly after the project announcement, in order to reach an understanding on the fringe payments customary for construction workers, such as premium rates for overtime. Subsequently, as new situations arose and changes were proposed, actions to be taken were discussed with and clearly understood by the unions.

A few of the subcontractors had written national agreements with the internationals concerned, and others had agreements with the locals, but the details of subcontractor practices were not explored as part of this survey.

Union Activity. Recruitment of an adequate and qualified labor force was the main union activity on the project as of November 1951. In connection with recruitment difficulties anticipated in the near future, a number of union spokesmen urged the need of a wage increase, but only one or two indicated that active negotiations were under way. Several, however, had submitted evidence to the Du Pont company, the AEC, and the Secretary of Labor showing that predetermined rates for their crafts were slightly below those prevailing, and one or two adjustments had been made on the basis of this evidence. No union efforts to alter Du Pont's working rules and safety, medical, and other employee programs were reported. One union representative said: "Their safety conditions are excellent, and the working conditions are . . . above normal in construction" although "all construction is bad, to a certain extent."

The settlement of members' grievances was another important union activity on the SRP. These cases were numerous, though mostly minor, according to union sources; some of the lower-paid local workers, for example, "fussed" not about wages but about the discipline, the size, and the strangeness of the project. Union international representatives, specially assigned to the area in some instances, handled a good deal of the grievance work.

The locals or the internationals, or both, also operated life insurance (and in some instances pension or sick benefit) programs for members—the coverage, size of member contribution, and employer contribution (in the case of some subcontractors) varying between crafts. Member

¹² James R. Newman, Yale Law Journal, December 1951. For a discussion of collective bargaining in quasi-public work in general, see Monthly Labor Review, March 1952 (p. 257).

¹³ On December 7, 1951, the electrical workers filed a petition for certification as representative for all electrical workers employed on the site; a hearing was held in late March 1952, and an election directed on May 8.

contributions to both local and international schemes were included in the monthly dues (initiation fees and dues ranging from \$20 and \$2, respectively, for laborers, to \$200 and \$6 for sheet-metal workers). Dues and payments on initiation fees were generally mailed or brought to the union office, or collected on the site outside working hours by the working stewards.

Industrial Disputes. The SRP had an exceptional industrial relations record as of November 1951. In contrast to the repeated work stoppages on some other large AEC construction projects during the same period, only one brief stoppage had occurred.¹⁴ On October 1, some 675 electricians, working under subcontractor supervision, walked out over a "misunderstanding as to the assignment of electricians as stand-bys during the dry-out of transformers," according to AEC. The union's international representative was summoned and, after an all-day conference on October 2, the men went back to work.

Union representatives testifying at the November 1951 congressional hearings reported considerable unrest on the project during October, when workers in several crafts interpreted the cut-back in "requisitions" to the unions for labor (hiring having been reduced because of design delays) as presaging recruitment through non-union sources. In their opinion, a serious stoppage might have occurred if union officials had not been forewarned by the company of the hiring "at the gate" scheduled in October (see Part I—Manpower and Wages, p. 5), in time to explain the situation to the membership. Describing the strong feeling among craft workers against working with nonunion men, the ironworkers' representative pointed out that a member "hanging a float" five stories up, for example, needed to trust the man working with him and to know that he had been accepted by a union examining board.

Explanations for the SRP's record of industrial peace varied. Some authorities attributed it primarily to the decisive management practices of the

Du Pont company and its policy of insuring that conditions of employment were at all times clearly understood by all concerned. Others pointed out that many locally recruited project workers had had little previous contact with unions; those who had were members of unions well-integrated into the community and accustomed to peaceful relations with local contractors. "Union discipline," on the other hand, was responsible for the lack of stoppages, according to some union sources. One organization, for example, required any member who came in with "gripes" to fill out and sign a detailed "Member's Grievance Report" form, which caused many to decide that "maybe it wasn't a grievance after all." When a member of this organization came to the union office and said his group "had a grievance and was going out in the morning," the business agent's policy was to tell him to "do that, but I'll have some other men up there" and hand him a grievance form. This business agent also pointed out that relations with Du Pont were completely handled by the international representatives rather than by less-experienced people.

Union officials were proud of the SRP's peaceful record. Various union spokesmen stressed at the hearings that their organizations were doing "everything in their power" to prevent work stoppages, including jurisdictional disputes—source of many frictions on construction projects. Du Pont officials said that they dealt with the unions on jurisdiction but the company decided which craft was entitled to a job if the unions were in disagreement. Representatives of several crafts criticized Du Pont's classification of certain jobs as nonmanual, hence not under union jurisdiction: the teamsters claimed three such categories and several unions said that the work of Du Pont's assistant area superintendents was normally performed by foremen in the construction industry. But the chief jurisdictional problem raised at the hearings was the IAM's long-standing claim to certain jobs handled on the project by the carpenters and the operating engineers. The IAM, having been excluded from construction work and awarded jurisdiction only over machinists hired to operate the machine shop, had considered filing charges of unfair labor practices and had complained to the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy.

¹⁴ On January 7, 1952, an unauthorized stoppage of about 800 operating engineers employed by Du Pont followed reassignment of an oiler, and approximately 1,500 truck drivers failed to report the following day, apparently in sympathy; both groups were back at work on January 9. Subsequent stoppages reported involved 22 teamsters on March 6, over discharge of a foreman and a truck driver, and 75 boilermakers on April 7-9, also over discharge of a worker; both groups were subcontractor employees.

Organization Before the Project

Union organization in the area adjacent to the site was largely confined, prior to the SRP announcement, to a small, quite highly organized group of AFL building trades in Augusta: the carpenters (local chartered in 1899); bricklayers (1899); plumbers (1908); electricians (1948); and painters (December 1950, the previous local's charter having been revoked a few months earlier owing to internal differences). The other unions represented on the project had locals chartered elsewhere in South Carolina and Georgia (generally at Savannah and Charleston) with jurisdiction over the SRP area, the jurisdictional line being drawn at the State boundary or geographically halfway between the locals concerned. However, none of these maintained branch offices in the area, and indications were that local membership was extremely limited.

The five Augusta craft unions were well established in the city, according to local observers, and had mutually satisfactory arrangements with local contractors. The electricians, for example, claimed some 90 percent of the electrical work in Augusta before the project's establishment. These unions were generally regarded as "responsible, respectable" organizations. The carpenters' business agent, described as the leading local labor spokesman, had been elected to the State legislature, and the union was a member in good standing of the Augusta Chamber of Commerce.

Outside the building trades, only a few small groups—the printing trades, teachers, postal workers, and some city workers—in Augusta were reported to have organized, mainly postwar. The few attempts which had been made at organizing the textile and other manual production workers—primarily by the CIO—were met by sharp employer resistance, strongly supported by local public opinion.

An organizing campaign in Augusta had been initiated by the CIO textile workers in 1949. The union won an NLRB election in September of that year at the Riverside Mill, a large cotton-waste plant employing mainly Negro workers. Extensive publicity, both in the local press and outside the area, was given to an exchange of letters between the CIO organizing committee and the Chamber of Commerce about a month after the election. The committee invited "sugges-

tions, help, or criticism" from the Chamber with regard to the organizing campaign and expressed the conviction that the latter would prove a blessing to the community. In reply, the Chamber secretary commented on the "empty factories" in New England and "severe dislocations" in southern cities following CIO organizing campaigns, described Augusta employers as "enlightened," and suggested that the union "take [its] 'blessings' elsewhere." A collapse of worker support for the union at the plant had followed, the Chamber secretary said when interviewed in November 1951. The anticipated negotiations did not take place, nor did the strike which several Augusta residents said "everyone feared" would follow the election.

Reportedly some strike activity and two unsuccessful NLRB elections accompanied efforts, by CIO and other organizers, to organize the common laborers (e. g., in brickyards) during this period.

Outside Augusta, union organization was virtually nonexistent. One Aiken plumbing business had an "on and off union shop," but otherwise labor was unorganized in Aiken, Barnwell, and the other small communities in the area.

Changes in Building Trades Organization

Of the project-connected crafts which had no locals chartered in Augusta, the boilermakers and sheet-metal workers handled recruitment through the Savannah and Charleston locals, respectively. The ironworkers general executive board set up an Augusta office under an international representative, specifically charged with supplying workers to the project only; new members, initiation fees, etc., were divided between the Savannah and Charleston locals, since the project tract came within the geographical jurisdiction of both. Few of the workers in these crafts were recruited locally. Organization of local workers had also been little affected in November 1951 by recruitment activities of the asbestos workers and the IAM (Savannah local), whose combined membership on the project was less than 50 at that time.

New Organizational Arrangements. By the time SRP construction hiring began in early February 1951, the AFL operating engineers, teamsters, and laborers had set up new offices in Aiken. The new laborers' unit was a temporary one: existing

locals in Savannah, Charleston, and Spartanburg (upper South Carolina) were pooled to form a Construction and General Laborers Council, but each local maintained its entity. In contrast, the teamsters chartered a new local, and the operating engineers established a fourth branch office of the local chartered originally in Charleston for the State of South Carolina.

Workers in these three categories were among those needed in largest numbers during the initial construction work. More laborers than any other trade were employed on the project in November 1951, and employment of teamsters and operating engineers exceeded that of almost all other crafts. Further additions were scheduled in all three trades, but a greater proportion of other crafts would be needed as construction progressed.

Almost all the laborers and the vast majority of truck drivers on the project at that time were local workers, as were over half of the operating engineers, according to a rough estimate by that union's business representative. All three unions concerned referred only members or applicants for membership to the project, and union rolls had accordingly risen sharply.

Of the 4,000 to 4,500 members of the Laborers Council in November 1951, some 3,000 were employed on the project, according to the council business manager (an official from the Savannah local). Any pre-project members of the three co-operating locals were included, but the union estimated that over 3,000 of its current members had joined after the council was organized. This excluded some 1,500 workers who had obtained refunds of down payments on initiation fees after they had been referred to the project and rejected, plus over 1,500 additional laborers who had either been rejected or subsequently separated and had not continued their membership. New members were allocated equally to the three locals by the council. Funds were also intermittently distributed to the three locals (totaling \$10,500 as of November 1951). The council collected all dues and fees and had about \$40,000 in assets at that time, the business manager stated at the November hearings, including initial loans of \$1,500 from the international and \$200 each from the three locals to get the council started.

Many new members came from the rural sections of South Carolina, where council efforts to

recruit project laborers had been vigorous, according to the business manager. Union representatives, he said, spent considerable time visiting small communities, encouraging potential construction workers to apply for project jobs, gathering them into groups, and helping to arrange transportation facilities to the project. Such workers frequently did not meet union obligations after making their \$10 down payments on initiation fees, and, since a trip to the union's Aiken office would represent an additional 60 to 70 miles of travel for many, the council maintained a sub-office in the field on paydays to cash checks for members and collect any union payments they might wish to make. Nevertheless, an estimated two-thirds of the membership had failed to make the second payment on their initiation fees or were delinquent on dues in November.

The teamsters' local was chartered under international trusteeship, following custom in establishing new locals, and the business agent was employed directly by the international. Current membership was 1,270, less than 200 being employed outside the project. Initially, the membership fee was set substantially below the \$25 fixed by the Southern Conference of Teamsters for the Southern States, but as the local people were absorbed it was raised, and as of October the full fee was established. Any members who came in from other locals were required to transfer to the Aiken unit, but most of the members were new to the union.

Under the trusteeship arrangement, members had a voice in raising dues and other regular procedures of the local, but the international appointed the officers. As soon as the \$5,000 lent by the international to start the local had been paid off and it "got running," the members were to elect their own officers. Half the loan had been repaid in October from the \$18,000 collected (exclusive of refunds) at that time, and an office had been repaired and equipped for use. Some informal educational work was being attempted in preparation for the eventual end of the trusteeship. One or two potential officers were given occasional jobs to do around the office, and printed material was distributed to the members, some meetings were held, etc. Teaching of union discipline and the meaning of organization was handicapped, however, by such factors as illiteracy

among some local workers; the latter's total inexperience in union functions or any form of united action to improve wages and working conditions; the fact that project rates for these workers were already higher than local pay; and the lack of experienced union men (generally not interested in coming to the project under existing conditions) to serve as working stewards or otherwise to provide leadership among the rank-and-file.

Since jurisdiction of the operating engineers was on a State basis in the area, the new Aiken office handled all project placement but workers in Augusta continued to come under the Savannah local. Membership of the South Carolina local rose from 143 shortly before establishment of the Aiken branch to 1,887 on November 1, 1951, almost all members having been hired by Du Pont or the specialty subcontractors. Members on the project in November numbered 1,300, the others presumably having been separated after initial hiring. How many of these were full-scale members of the South Carolina unit was not clear, however: a worker belonging to another local could either transfer his membership, if approved by the South Carolina local, or remain a member of his home local and pay the Aiken office a "temporary working permit" fee; a new member also had the option of paying the initiation fee (down payment and balance in 30 days) or of paying the permit fee until the "obligation of contract" was paid. Over \$130,000 had been collected by the South Carolina local as a whole from dues, fees, and "permits" during the first 9 months of 1951.

Membership cards were of three types in this organization, with initiation fees and dues scaled accordingly: apprentices, new members or applicants, and full-scale qualified engineers who had been with the organization for many years and operated heavy equipment at top pay scales. Only this last-mentioned group had the right to vote, and officers were required to be elected from among them—a regulation designed to safeguard the organization against election of "undesirable" persons, union spokesmen stated, since they "don't know who these [new members] are until such time as they qualify."

All three unions tried to place workers rejected or subsequently discharged by the SRP on other jobs in the area. A Laborers Council spokesman, for example, said that a number of SRP medical

rejects had been placed with contractors requiring no physical examination of employees; he cited one job, not connected with the project, with 50-odd such rejects out of some 60 workers. Each of the other two organizations indicated that they had reached agreement with one or two local contractors, who would have lost their force to the project if they had not been willing to pay union wages. In this connection, one nonproject strike was reported during the period following the SRP announcement: the teamsters and laborers, employed by the State contractor constructing the highway between Augusta and the site, walked off the job briefly on March 23, 1951, reportedly over organization of the job as well as wage demands. (Wage agreement was reached on March 26.)

Preoccupation of union officials with SRP recruitment, however, and the general limitation of nonproject construction¹⁵ to small and scattered jobs during this period suggested that such new organization was limited in November 1951. No efforts were being made at that time to organize maintenance workers employed by local firms in these trades.

An operating engineers' official pointed out that his organization worked largely on big construction jobs and would be unlikely to deal with small local contractors. The union already had agreements with the big contractors who might come into the area to build a road, for example, or for some other specific construction job; included were a number of the project subcontractors. Establishment of a permanent Aiken office by this organization largely reflected the expectation, based on experience at other AEC installations, that construction work would continue to be available on the SRP even after major facilities were completed.

Effect on Augusta Unions. Existing Augusta unions were unevenly affected by the project, depending on the size of project needs for each craft, local contractor activity, whether in-migrant union members transferred to the Augusta local, and so on. The addition of project workers increased the membership of all these unions and their funds, available for future organizational efforts as well as current activities. Some wage increases were negotiated for nonproject workers as indicated in Part I—Manpower and Wages,

¹⁵ Only a few local contractors had project subcontracts, generally for jobs requiring a fairly small number of workers.

page 10. But indications were that existing relations with local contractors had changed little as of November 1951.

None of these Augusta locals had more than a few hundred members before SRP construction began—the largest being the carpenters with 525 members. Project employment of carpenters, the only trade other than laborers with over 3,000 employed on the SRP in November, was nearly 5 times that of any other of the Augusta-organized crafts, and membership in the Augusta local had risen to more than 3,000—almost all project employees. Figures are not available on how many of these workers had retained their membership in other locals, however, which they were permitted to do by paying the Augusta local the equivalent of its monthly dues.

Union administration of the over 600 members of the plumbers and pipefitters' union on the SRP was kept separate from that of nonproject members, the international and the local having jointly set up a special office in Augusta about the first of March to handle project work. It was not clear how many project workers were additions to the Augusta local's membership. (No membership figures were available.) Over 300 applicants for membership had been hired on the project since its start, as well as some 600 union men; but many of the latter retained membership elsewhere, according to a union spokesman, and a number of these had quit due to inadequate take-home pay.

An electrical workers' official stated that the majority of the over 700 SRP electricians had retained membership in other locals and benefited the Augusta organization little, either temporarily or over the long-run. However, the latter's membership had risen from 119 (of whom 88 had taken SRP jobs) to 341 in November, including transfers from other locals as well as new members. Membership in the painters' local stood at 138 at the end of September, including 43 transfers from the local whose charter had been revoked; over 100 members were on the project. The bricklayers initiated 110 new members during the first 10 months of 1951, raising membership to 321. About 100 were currently employed on the project, including 35 new union members as well as members of other locals, who had the option of transferring to the Augusta local.

The bricklayers' union was the only organization reporting a dues increase after the project's announcement. The increase—to the same level fixed during World War II—was necessitated by the extra work entailed in manning the project, according to union officials, which required employment of a full-time business agent as had been necessary for defense construction during the war.

Relations Between Unions. Project-connected unions in Aiken and Augusta established a joint building-trades council in the summer of 1951, but information on its membership and activity in November was inconsistent. Both the president and vice president were officials of organizations newly established in Aiken, and union comments suggested that the newer groups were taking the lead in organizing the council.

Describing the council as active and functioning, thus enabling union officers to talk over problems and exchange information, the council vice president said that all the crafts had joined except the carpenters, who were expected to do so shortly. Another unionist new to the area indicated that the council had been meeting for some time, but that the November hearings really "got them going"; all the locals were in, he stated, except the electricians, who had a jurisdictional dispute with several other crafts. On the other hand, two Augusta union officials said neither of their crafts was a member. One of them was convinced the unions would be stronger in dealing with the company if they were unified, but his organization traditionally worked alone. The other asserted that Augusta had not had a joint building-trades council in 20 years, though a Central Labor Union representing all AFL locals in the city was active; as for the newly formed council, several important crafts did not belong, he commented, and in his opinion it did not amount to much.

Although the Congressional hearings in November tended to unite the unions, according to some observers, they also brought into the open existing discords, particularly between the pre-project Augusta unions and the newly established Aiken units. Dealing with members of the United States Congress was a new experience for most local representatives and appeared to

intensify existing resentments. One Augusta official, for example, called the Congressmen's attention to the fact that his organization "is not a lodge nor a local from Savannah or Columbia operating up here, but is right here in Augusta." Another Augusta business manager, interviewed shortly after the hearings, termed the newly arrived unions "fly-by-night outfits" and was vehement in his opinion that if a union is going to do business it should "set up an office and do business regularly," whether employment and organizational opportunities go up or down.

Negro Membership. Negro members of building-trades unions in the SRP area were largely concentrated as of November 1951 in the laborers' union, with smaller numbers in the teamster, bricklayer, and carpenter organizations. Negroes were employed in no other crafts on the project, though at least one craft union reportedly included colored helpers (not employed on the project in this category) in its membership. A few Negroes were reported to have applied for union referral to the SRP in some of these other crafts, but apparently none had as yet been admitted to membership in the locals in the SRP area nor referred to the project.

Common laborers were customarily colored, in the area. The bricklayers' union, with local jurisdiction over the "trowel trades," was the one craft traditionally mixed racially there; all local cement finishers were Negroes, an Augusta source observed, and, except for a few masons (including the president), the bricklayers' membership would therefore be colored. The new teamster local included both races, the preponderance being white. Queried by a New York Times reporter concerning charges of discrimination in admission to the union (see Part I—Manpower and Wages, p. 7), the carpenters' head stated that the organization had admitted Negroes in the South since 1941. At the time the project started, however, the Augusta local had no Negro members, and, according to local sources, the only colored members in the general area belonged to a segregated local in Columbia, S. C. The Augusta local was reported to have admitted colored members beginning in the late summer of 1951. Information on the status of these members with regard to segregation was somewhat conflicting, but recent

reports from the area indicate that changes are currently in process in union arrangements for handling project workers, both white and colored.

Effect on Other Workers

The only new organizational development reported among nonconstruction workers in the SRP area during the period under review was in Barnwell, in the small zipper company which a few years earlier had moved into a building leased from the Barnwell development corporation. The new plant was "just getting on its feet" and strong public resentment accompanied an attempt by its workers, in the spring of 1951, to form a union.

Reports on the circumstances surrounding the attempt varied. One local official pointed out that the plant came originally from New York, where it had been having "labor troubles" at the time of its move; in his opinion, union organizers had followed the company to the area, although several workers in the plant were "key agitators" in the movement for a union. On the other hand, some observers suggested that the effort to organize had originated with the plant employees cited, who were seeing unions in operation for the first time, and that they had got in touch with union organizers through one of the construction unions. In any case, these workers were included in a group laid off by the company, and the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (AFL) filed charges of unfair labor practices with the NLRB in late May 1951. NLRB investigators visited the area and found that lack of orders had in fact forced the company to lay off workers; however, when rehiring began the workers in question were to be included.

With regard to the expectations of community leaders and local residents concerning the long-range effect of the project on local labor, some were apprehensive that organized labor would now "move in" on the area and bring "labor troubles" for the first time. Others asserted, on the basis of the "temporary" nature of SRP construction work, that the new organization of local labor was a passing phenomenon only and conditions would return to "normal" as construction declined.

Experience at other AEC installations supplies no guide to the probable long-run effect of such a project on local organization; major local indus-

tries were already organized and in some instances the projects were considerably more isolated than is the SRP. Some observers pointed out the various difficulties generally encountered in organizing workers in the South. Others stressed that the permanent effect would in any case depend largely on the organization of "permanent" SRP workers after manufacturing operations got under

way. Both the CIO chemical workers and the AFL metal trades unions have organized AEC plants, the latter having far greater membership among atomic energy workers. At the time the SRP was studied in November 1951, representatives of the AFL Metal Trades Department met and mapped an "intensive and continuous" organizing campaign in AEC installations.

III.—Housing and Changes in Population

Over 10,000 in-migrant construction workers had been housed in the Savannah River Plant (SRP) area as of November 1951—largely in existing structures. Rooms, houses, and apartments had been sufficient in number, although they were not always of the kind desired and numerous stories circulated of workers living in crowded or otherwise undesirable quarters. Few workers had left the project specifically because of housing deficiencies, but various union sources cited instances of individuals who had left the area without applying for SRP jobs when they were unable to find adequate housing. The number of in-migrant workers was scheduled to more than double by the time SRP construction reached its peak. Both temporary and new permanent housing was expected to become available before that time, however.

Housing availability largely determined the geographical distribution of SRP-incurred population increases, at the time of this survey, tending to increase the concentration in the Augusta-Aiken metropolitan area. Lesser numbers of project workers had located in the other South Carolina towns, particularly since persons connected with Camp Gordon occupied a considerable amount of the housing available in Augusta. Large-scale population increases in these smaller towns were expected during the period when temporary housing was located in or near them, but, with the possible exception of Barnwell, major long-range changes appeared likely to be confined chiefly to the larger communities.

AEC Policy

Benefiting from previous experience, AEC had departed from earlier policy on its major construction projects and had decided to build no "Government town" on the site for SRP workers, either temporary or permanent.¹⁶ Instead, it relied on existing communities to furnish facilities and

¹⁶ No Government town had been built at the Arco, Idaho, AEC project, but this was a much smaller project, with a slower construction schedule. A similar policy was also being followed in the construction of the Paducah, Ky., installation, also somewhat smaller than the SRP.

services and on private development and financing to supply the housing required for in-migrant workers. AEC hoped in this way to avoid the continuing difficulties that had been encountered in operating such communities at other production centers—difficulties disproportionately large in relation to the small part which the towns represented in the over-all atomic-energy program. Administration of these towns had given rise to congressional criticism of waste and lack of self-government and myriad complaints of all kinds from town residents, and labor relations had been complicated with questions of rent, housing standards, and other living conditions.

Admittedly the new policy involved important problems for the SRP, particularly during construction, since the adequacy of housing as well as other living facilities was a substantial factor in manning the project. Therefore, AEC authorized special arrangements with private contractors to provide temporary housing near existing communities for those construction workers who, estimates indicated, could not be otherwise housed. The AEC project staff also supported community requests for aid to Congress and Federal agencies; supplied information on manpower schedules and available Federal services to community officials, and on local housing and facilities in relation to manning plans to Federal agencies; and made available their experience in handling community problems gained at other AEC installations.

Project Workers' Housing

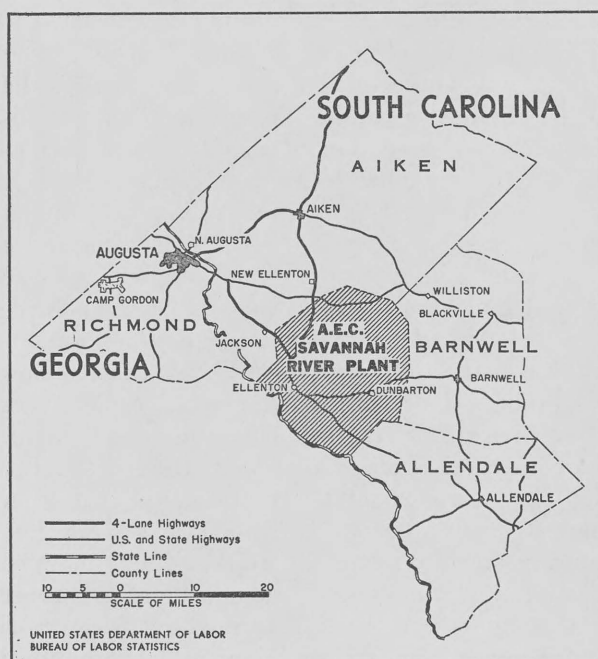
Most authorities expressed the opinion that a critical shortage of housing for SRP workers had been avoided only because the cut-back in hiring rates beginning in September 1951 (see Part I—Manpower and Wages, p. 3) had reduced the flow of in-migrants substantially. Both project officials and community leaders had anticipated that, as of September, most existing housing would be occupied and available to newcomers only as workers left the area or moved into newly constructed homes. Nevertheless, in-migrants who came into the area during September and October were absorbed, in spite of delays in temporary as well as permanent housing erection. Some local

sources commented that they were continually amazed at the "expandability" of the area.

To minimize the housing and facilities problem, the SRP utilized local workers as extensively as possible. As of mid-October, however, nearly 13,000 SRP workers (over 60 percent of SRP hires at that time) had been recruited from outside the 50-mile "commuting area," although some had quit the project and left the area. (This figure also included an undetermined number of commuters who lived beyond the 50-mile radius.) Data are not available on the number of family members coming in with the in-migrant workers.

Du Pont used newspaper advertisements, teams of room scouts, and other means in an effort to locate and have landlords make available to SRP personnel whatever housing existed within the 50-mile commuting radius. A central housing listing of available rental units was kept, and workers were referred to landlords from this list. In some instances, particularly in newly constructed rental units, Du Pont reserved apartments and some houses for rental to project workers (until the first such occupancy) by leasing unoccupied units and paying the rents until the contracts were transferred to workers.

Savannah River Plant Area, November 1951



Existing Structures and Private Trailers. A large proportion of the workers were reportedly living in housing made available in existing structures. Some "give" had been created in Augusta in the first half of 1950 when Camp Gordon was scheduled for stand-by status following the construction boom of the late 1940's, but by the time SRP hiring began, servicemen and their families had already begun to fill available units (in North Augusta as well as Augusta) and they continued to compete for housing. Little postwar construction had occurred in the South Carolina communities affected, although a slight postwar population decline gave them some "cushion" for the SRP influx.

People opened up new rental units on a large scale in both Aiken and Augusta, as they had done during World War II, many taking roomers for the first time, converting rooms and houses to apartments, and opening or expanding rooming and boarding houses. Some such housing was made available in the smaller South Carolina communities, but in Barnwell, for example, local sources indicated that residents tended to rent rooms only when prospective renters approached them: it was not customary to fix up rental quarters in advance for an unknown renter—he might want something totally different or the owner might not want him as a tenant. (Pre-project renting was largely restricted to houses for tenant farmers, and when a prospective tenant saw a house he wanted to rent, he and the owner worked out the rent on the basis of what improvements were wanted.) Even after the demand began to appear, people continued to be reluctant to take in strangers. Some did so, however, a notable example being an army-barracks type of project built by a veteran in the spring of 1951 with capacity for some 40 men. Once the new arrivals started getting acquainted, they frequently moved in with people who had previously refused to take roomers.

Detailed information on the quality of such housing was not available, although both long-time residents and newly arrived people cited instances of cots being crowded into small rooms, lack of heat, and so on. Other examples cited were share-cropper shacks which had been moved off the site to nearby locations, "some paint and

a few nails" applied, and either sold or rented to SRP workers.

The conviction was unanimous among Augusta and Aiken sources that the "saturation point" had finally been reached in their communities as of November 1951. Some housing was reportedly still available in the less urban communities: A Barnwell official cited several big old homes, occupied by lone individuals who did not want to take people in, as proof that not all the "conversion-type" housing had been tapped. Project officials too indicated that during the relative lull in hiring in September and October a number of rooms had been located in the commuting area which were already available or could be made so if critically needed. In their opinion, a sufficient backlog of listings had been built up to take care of the immediate demand even when large-scale hiring started once more.

Some 1,600 trailers were also parked in the area as of October 31; most of these were brought in by the workers, with a few purchased locally. The trailers were generally regarded as comfortable, convenient quarters for their migrant owners. But again instances were cited (particularly among the early arrivals who had located either on or very near the site) of workers living in makeshift trailers—old cars or trucks which had been converted to some kind of dwelling. Some people had lived in tents during the summer of 1951 and one family was described as having set up furniture in the open, as if in the various rooms of a house, using a covered truck for shelter in bad weather.

Of the trailers in the area in October, only about 200 were located in lots which were not planned parks. When hiring began in February 1951, several thousand workers were expected to bring trailers to the area, and a few trailer parks had already been started near the site to provide facilities for them. Most courts were set up by people new to the business, frequently local residents. They were assisted in locating and planning parks by a representative of the Trailer Coach Manufacturers Association, stationed in Aiken from early 1951 until August. Over 60 parks were in operation by November. In addition to the occupied spaces, nearly 1,000 were vacant and a comparable number planned. Trailers in the area at that time, housing less than

10 percent of the SRP construction force, numbered somewhat fewer than had been anticipated on the basis of experience at other AEC installations. The proportionate number of trailers, however, was expected to increase as the ratio of skilled to other workers rose in ensuing months.

New Construction. A relatively small proportion of SRP workers were in newly constructed housing in November 1951, according to local sources, but information was not available on the exact amount of total building completed or under construction in the area. At the time of the announcement of the project, several hundred housing units were under construction, or authorized, in local communities, without regard to project needs. Plans for additional units were subsequently drawn, and a considerable number of Federal Housing Administration commitments were made for insuring mortgages on new construction. Many of these commitments, as well as a good share of the housing being undertaken without FHA guarantees, were in Richmond County, available for residents connected with Camp Gordon as well as for SRP employees.

To stimulate new residential construction specifically for SRP employees, the Housing and Home Finance Agency in March 1951 programmed 1,000 rental and 150 sales units for relaxation of credit restraints on construction (subsequently the restraints were suspended for these units). Based on employment estimates in February 1951, the HHFA had set a total of 3,600 units as the minimum new construction needed to house permanent SRP personnel (both AEC and Du Pont). The remaining 2,450 units were to be programmed after necessary water and sewage facilities were extended. This housing, while designed to take care of long-term needs, would have been available to any SRP employee, whether a "temporary" construction or an operations worker.

Authorizations were issued, to eligible employees certified by AEC (largely construction workers), for construction of almost all of the sales units, but only some 20 of the rental units had been started by October 1951. Indications were that housing starts outside the HHFA program were also relatively limited. Some new housing was, of course, under construction throughout the period under review, such as the homes which a number

of AEC employees were having built in Aiken, and several developments (including some prefabricated housing) started by local builders in Barnwell. Local residents described this as a rapid housing expansion. But the HHFA field representative pointed out that current construction activity, while more than usual in the small South Carolina towns and more than Augusta had had in its early 1950 slump, was inadequate for the anticipated demand. (Further, some of the "new" dwelling units in the towns nearest the project boundary were houses moved from the site.)

Lack of financing was the main deterrent to new construction, attributed partly to the terms required for FHA insurance of mortgages and partly to lack of mortgage money in any case (following the removal of Federal Reserve Board support for Government bonds). Limited water and sewage facilities were also a deterrent but to a lesser degree, for builders in some instances supplied independent facilities or financed extensions.¹⁷ (As one observer pointed out, however, the necessity for a builder to figure provision of such facilities in his costs was a factor in the type of housing provided; a buyer, for example, obtained less for a given price than he would in areas where facilities were already available.) Building materials, although reported to be short in mid-1951, were apparently no insurmountable obstacle, since builders applying for HHFA authorizations in October 1951 indicated no problem in this regard.¹⁸

With Presidential approval of the Defense Housing and Community Facilities and Service Act on September 1, 1951, it was generally expected that the construction needed for SRP personnel would finally be started. By amending the National Housing Act, the new legislation liberalized FHA mortgage-insurance terms for building loans to meet defense housing requirements in critical areas.¹⁹ Builders in the SRP

area could obtain FHA insurance under the liberalized terms for units which met HHFA requirements as to rentals and were made available to project workers.

In mid-October, HHFA announced that it would program immediately the full 3,600 units needed, although action had not been completed on appropriations to make the new legislation effective and FHA was not yet accepting applications under its terms. Thus, preliminary steps toward construction could be taken even for housing which could not be built until the new legislation was implemented. Existing aids, principally the defense-area exception from credit restrictions, were available for all units covered, including those previously programmed but not built as well as the newly added units. Accordingly, HHFA was prepared to issue authorizations to build 3,300 rental and 130 sales units, and applications were to be filed immediately.

Local observers reported that the liberalized mortgage insurance terms were so attractive to builders in the project area that HHFA immediately received applications for many times the number of units eligible for aid. In mid-November, HHFA announced distribution to builders of certificates for the full number authorized (except for those allocated to North Augusta, issued shortly thereafter on completion of plans for provision of facilities). Provided that builders were now able to obtain financing, the first of these units were expected to become available for occupancy in March or April 1952, with the remainder to be completed by July. Some question was raised as to whether the number of units programmed for the permanent staff would prove adequate over the long run, and project officials were also concerned at that time as to whether the housing—generally small and cheap—would be desirable to operations personnel.

According to recent information, 1,000 of the rental units certified had been completed by mid-1952, and most of the remainder were under way. The vast majority of the total sales units also had been or were being constructed.

¹⁷ In Barnwell, for example, some extensions had been financed by builders as a loan to the town, which could not itself finance the additions. This had made some new housing possible, but only insofar as builders could afford the added investment. The city planner cited one housing development, planned by a local firm, which was only one-third completed because the firm could afford no more of the added investment for facilities.

¹⁸ Shortages of structural steel eased substantially in early 1952 and in February-March the National Production Authority relaxed building controls on commercial structures already started and construction of new churches, municipal buildings and community centers, homes, schools, and highways.

¹⁹ The new legislation also provided (1) limited assistance to defense communities for water and sewage facilities and (2) additional authority for the Federal National Mortgage Association (FNMA) to make advance

commitments to purchase mortgages until the end of 1951. Pending implementation of the legislation, however, HHFA approved applications only if adequate basic facilities appeared to be available without recourse to the facilities aid authorized; FNMA purchase of secondary mortgages was little known and little used in the SRP area.

Temporary Housing. AEC authorized Du Pont to award temporary housing contracts guaranteeing to the contractor payment of amounts equivalent to the revenue normally required to amortize the investment. This was a recognition that, without special incentive, private development would not provide sufficient housing for the large-scale but temporary influx of construction workers. Difficulties were numerous in planning the timing and size of such a program, even assuming that SRP construction proceeded on schedule, since project officials had to rely on rough estimates. It was impossible to know, for example, exactly how much housing would be constructed or opened up for SRP workers; how many workers would commute, own trailers, bring families (either immediately or later); what the in-migrant turn-over rate would be; and so on.

As noted, it was generally anticipated that no vacant housing would be available in September 1951. Accordingly, Du Pont in June invited bids on contracts to supply temporary housing for 4,000 families and 7,500 single men in the vicinity of communities surrounding the site. Two contracts were awarded in August, one for trailers in camps of 500 to 1,000 units for family occupancy and the other for 75 barracks-type buildings housing 100 single men each. Du Pont guaranteed 90 percent of the rents set on the former, for 52 months, and 100 percent of the rents for single accommodations for 24 months. Either contract could be canceled or reduced at any time within these guaranteed periods by payment according to a stipulated termination schedule.²⁰ Contractors were to furnish land and all utilities, provide limited hotel-type management of single workers' quarters, and remove and dispose of all facilities after their purpose was served. It was hoped that through this novel arrangement temporary needs would be met adequately without creating future "ghost towns" and at a much lower cost to the Government than that of outright Government construction.

The first units were not available for occupancy on September 1, as planned. Actual signing of the contracts was delayed, owing among other things to the contractors' difficulties in obtaining financing. As of mid-November, some of the

barracks were under construction at Barnwell, but the trailer contractor was still selecting appropriate sites, and none of either type was ready.

Over half the family units were completed by mid-1952, and they were being occupied as rapidly as they were installed, according to recent information. The barracks program had been reduced to 4,500 spaces, however, as few were being utilized (890 dormitory spaces were filled on July 8, 1952; all barracks had been completed at that time). Explanations for this latter situation varied. Some observers attributed it to the undesirable quality of the housing offered; most of the in-migrant construction workers were skilled or semiskilled men with relatively high wages, they pointed out, and were not likely to be satisfied with such housing. Others suggested that the "expandability" of the area had been underestimated. However, still other sources emphasized the contrasting demand for the temporary family units and suggested that the number of construction workers who would come to the area without families had been overestimated. (Various observers have noted the postwar change in the mobile construction force, from a group composed chiefly of unattached workers to one made up largely of men who take families with them from job to job.)

Effect on Local Housing Conditions

Rent increases (see Part I—Manpower and Wages, p. 10) had in some instances created hardships for those pre-project residents housed in rental dwellings not only in terms of money but also because of the forced reduction in housing standards. One family reportedly had its rent raised, immediately after the SRP announcement, on a house it had occupied for over 10 years; unconnected with the project and with no means of augmenting their income, they were forced to move. Another family, also forced out by a rent increase, had moved three times as of November, each time having the house "sold out from under them." They were described as currently living in a place where "you can see through the cracks in the walls."

Other than examples such as these, most of the criticism of housing quality noted in November 1951 referred to the facilities provided the new-

²⁰ Du Pont also agreed to negotiate a mutually satisfactory arrangement with the contractors if established rates exceeded those subsequently approved by rent control authorities.

comers rather than to changes in housing conditions of pre-project residents. Little specific information was available on how many newly rented rooms, for instance, were actually surplus before the SRP. But inevitably absorption of major population increases in existing structures produced some crowding, particularly in the larger communities.

The planned housing construction offered little immediate possibility of easing overcrowded conditions; existing units vacated in the metropolitan sections would be in demand by new in-migrants even after temporary housing (in many instances less centrally located and otherwise less desirable) became available. No other large-scale new construction was reported to be imminent, and Camp Gordon was still expanding, further increasing the pressure on Augusta housing. Congested conditions in the larger communities thus appeared likely to continue until SRP construction passed its peak.

Similarly, it appeared unlikely that the new construction stimulated by SRP housing needs would contribute much to long-term elimination of substandard units in the area. Federal authorities rated as substandard approximately half of the pre-project dwellings in Augusta and some 20 percent in the South Carolina communities other than Aiken, which had only about 5 percent such housing.

In explaining the long-term development plans for Augusta and that city's objection to "shoddy shantytown construction" or other temporary housing, the city planner told a reporter in the fall of 1951 that, if too much permanent housing were constructed during the "3-year boom," units left over after construction workers departed would be used to clean out slum areas. But the general limitation of planned construction to that expected to be needed by the permanent AEC staff, the restriction of building incentives to housing reserved for project workers, and the continuing needs of Camp Gordon personnel suggested that any such improvement would be minor. Further, substandard housing was reportedly most severe in the Negro sections of town, and few Negroes were expected to be among the in-migrant SRP operations personnel for whom the new construction was planned. Presumably congestion in the Negro sections had not been increased by SRP

in-migration at the time of this survey, since no Negro workers were reported to have come into the area for project work. Late in May 1951, when the press noted that colored tenant farmers were arriving in Augusta in search of jobs and housing, it was stated that white housing was barely sufficient and that the Negro population was "vastly overcrowded."

However, the long-term situation depended upon the accuracy of the estimates on which the new construction was programmed, as well as whether the planned units were actually built.

Population Changes in the Area

Identification of the project with production of materials for possible use in a hydrogen bomb gave it national prominence and people all over the country soon heard rumors of possibilities such as high-paying jobs, and big sales. During the 2½ months immediately following the November 1950 SRP announcement, both the Aiken and Augusta Chambers of Commerce were flooded with letters of inquiry, received midnight telephone calls from workers who had "just heard" and wanted information, and so on. But large numbers of workers arrived without bothering to inquire—frequently with families and without funds. Most of them moved on when they found no jobs yet available (see discussion in Part I, p. 5); after wage rates were announced and hiring began, the influx became more orderly. Meantime, however, the chaotic initial arrival of workers had caused serious problems and given rise to widespread publicity and local fears concerning the disruption to come.

The only estimates of total population increases for the area as a whole available in November 1951 were those made by the Augusta Chamber of Commerce. Based on the estimated increase from Camp Gordon plus the project employment and average annual employment rises, and assuming three additional family members per worker, the Chamber estimated that the population of Richmond County had increased 35,000 between the 1950 Census and October 1951, to a total of 144,000. During the same period, they estimated the population of Aiken and Barnwell Counties in South Carolina had increased 25,000, to a total of 97,000.

Local comment in some of the South Carolina communities suggested that the latter figure was

somewhat high, and the population increase in Augusta (accounting for two-thirds of Richmond County's 1950 population) was estimated in September by the city planner at only 7,000. But how nearly any of the estimates approximated the actual increase was impossible to corroborate, and how much of the Augusta area population rise was attributable to the SRP as distinct from Camp Gordon was equally impossible to ascertain. In addition to the lack of exact figures on immigrant SRP workers or their families, no estimates had been made of the number of other persons attracted to the area by the project. Most of the new distributive and service concerns were reportedly small, and some had been started by local residents.

Site Residents. Those site residents who had moved out by November 1951 generally had located in neighboring sections but reports as to how many had left, the status of the remainder, and related information were somewhat conflicting. The site was being purchased progressively, in relation to construction schedules. Federal and State agricultural agencies helped relocate displaced families, especially the landless Negro share croppers who made up the bulk of the site population. Du Pont officials stated in November 1951 that thus far people had been evacuated only from the areas where construction was currently going on or where it was necessary to obtain the land for access purposes.

Purchases had been completed at that time on a little over a third of the tracts involved, and the former landowners were reported to have found new homes and new farms in nearby counties or elsewhere in the two States. Most of the few site businesses, largely located in Ellenton and very prosperous owing to the project-created business "boom," had already been, or were scheduled to be, moved to nearby communities such as Jackson or New Ellenton, as were a number of the site houses, including the tenant shacks mentioned. Several observers commented that the rate of land acquisition was causing trouble, however, particularly in Ellenton, where "most of the people are still waiting for the assessor, can't do anything about moving until they have some

money, don't know where they're going or what they're going to do."²¹

Tenant farmers had "disappeared overnight," it was reported. The general shortage of farm workers had caused landowners in other South Carolina and Georgia counties, and even in other States, to advertise and send requests for share croppers immediately after the SRP announcement. The demand for share croppers elsewhere brought little response apparently, but site tenants were variously described as (1) being anxious to stay in the area and tending to wait until their white employers decided what to do, (2) having taken SRP jobs as laborers, or (3) having found new landlords in adjacent or nearby counties.

Distribution of SRP Workers in November. Project officials emphasized the importance of dispersion of project workers throughout the area, to minimize traffic and other problems. Of course, the workers were scattered in the sense that they were not all living in a specially built development nor even in one town, but were dispersed throughout a given community. In fact, however, their preferences, housing availability, and other such factors tended to produce a certain amount of concentration.

Owing to their size, Aiken and Augusta bore the brunt of the first disorganized and disruptive influx. Worker preference for living where metropolitan facilities were accessible continued to influence the distribution of the SRP force so long as quarters were sufficiently available to permit some choice, and would again become important when the construction force began to decline. In November 1951, the main determinant was availability of housing, but this also contributed to the SRP workers being chiefly concentrated in Augusta, suburban North Augusta, and nearby Aiken. The main body of single workers (or workers with families outside the area) was reported to be centered in the rooming houses in or near downtown Augusta; workers with families were somewhat more dispersed. Project officials estimated roughly that about half the force was in Georgia (including locally recruited workers, of whom a

²¹ All Ellenton residents had left the town by March 1, 1952; some 80 percent of the 150 houses there, it was reported, had been moved in the process of evacuation.

much larger proportion came from South Carolina than from Georgia).

By November, Barnwell had absorbed a substantial number of workers. The town was closer to the site than some of the other communities, and Barnwell leaders had actively welcomed in-migrants, new housing had been started, etc. A census of Barnwell (taken in September by field workers from the University of North Carolina as part of a long-term urbanization study of the area²² and published in October) showed only an increase of a few hundred over the 1950 census total of nearly 2,000. Residents labeled the findings erroneous, although the study group pointed out that the census covered only "old Barnwell," excluding the area added by the extension of the city limits.²³ One local official interviewed said that he could himself have "counted more new residents than that even without a full census" and put the total population at more nearly 3,000. Others, however, said that the recorded increase was small because the count was taken just when the influx really began in Barnwell.

Relatively small numbers of SRP workers were housed in the other small towns as of November. An Allendale source, for example, said that the town "didn't feel the project at all" until early summer, and when project workers eventually began coming, they did so gradually, since "after all, Allendale didn't have many rooms, apartments, and so on." Various observers stressed, however, that even small additions to towns of this size represented proportionately great population rises.

Less than 100 trailers were in Richmond County, on the fringes of Augusta, although some were parked within the Aiken city limits. A number of trailers were located in both Barnwell and Williston; several "trailer communities" had grown up on the highways between Augusta and the project; and some workers were living in trailers or local dwellings on the site at Ellenton. (One source estimated in November that about half the population of the town consisted of in-migrants, who would have to move when the town was evacuated.) Most trailers, however, were

concentrated in New Ellenton, a new community which had sprung up some 4 miles outside the site boundary on the highway to Aiken. Some SRP workers were also housed there in shacks moved from the site and set up in development style, and some small bungalows had been rapidly constructed.

New Ellenton was frequently regarded as a permanent addition to the other towns in the area. Initially some of the residents of Ellenton had moved to the new location with the idea of perpetuating the old town's name. A number of eating places and supermarkets were operating or under construction there at the time of this survey—also a movie tent was set up on one side of the highway and a Gospel tent on the other. In mid-November, a few New Ellenton residents met to work out some type of formal status for the town (chiefly in order to get help on their serious water-facilities problem, according to local sources). Several local observers questioned the permanence of New Ellenton, however, noting that the community was still largely made up of trailer residents and "when they pull out it will be pretty hard hit." Something would undoubtedly continue on a permanent basis, in their opinion, but just how much was questionable.

The tiny "crossroads community" of Jackson, less than a mile from the site boundary, had grown sufficiently to be incorporated as a town in June 1951. Press reports described a population rise from 200 before the project to 1,000 in October 1951.

Long-Range Expectations. Most observers anticipated that SRP workers would locate in large numbers in the smaller pre-project towns only during the period when temporary housing was available. Location of sites for the temporary units had constituted a real problem, particularly in view of the need for sites where adequate basic facilities could be provided; in addition, residents of the larger communities were reluctant to have temporary housing (particularly the barracks) near their towns. Finally, slightly over half the trailers were scheduled to be located near Aiken and Augusta. Both temporary barracks and trailers were to be erected near Barnwell and Williston, and barracks near Allendale. (In November 1951, indications were that a large

²² The 2-year study was sponsored by the HHFA and the U. S. Public Health Service and was to cover (1) urban growth of the plant area and (2) changes in habits and attitudes of present and incoming population.

²³ Barnwell extended the town limits in June 1951. Three months later, Aiken voted down a similar proposal. Shortly thereafter North Augusta and four suburbs voted annexation—increasing the former's area more than five times and almost doubling the population.

proportion of the workers to be housed in temporary units would thus reside in the smaller towns; the relatively greater use of the trailers had modified this expectation somewhat by mid-1952, although the construction force had not reached its peak level, and it was still possible that the rate of dormitory occupancy would rise.)

In contrast, nearly three-fourths of the HHFA-programmed new construction was scheduled for Augusta, North Augusta, and Aiken. Barnwell was allocated less than a tenth of the total, and the remainder was distributed fairly evenly among Allendale, Williston, and Blackville. Local sources commented that, while some residents planned construction in the smaller towns, the "big real estate people" were interested in building only in the "Aiken-Augusta sweep," reflecting the general expectation that the SRP force would tend to concentrate in that area once project construction declined. Contributing to this view was the fact that if the gates to the project were shut,²⁴ Allendale would be virtually cut off from Augusta and its metropolitan facilities, and the distance from Barnwell to Augusta would be greatly increased on existing highways. Persons moving from the site to such communities as Williston, Jackson, and New Ellenton of course represented permanent, if small, population increases.

Barnwell officials were reported to be disappointed at the small allocation of HHFA-programmed building to that town. As noted previously on page 2, influential leaders in both Augusta and Barnwell hoped that new industry could be attracted by the availability of skilled labor as SRP construction declined. These communities therefore welcomed construction as well as operations personnel and expected permanent

population additions from both groups. Some people doubted that the construction workers would remain in the area. Local residents generally, in fact, tended to regard SRP construction as a 3-year job after which "temporary" workers would depart and only the relatively small operations force would remain as permanent additions to the community. The fact that in-migrants (in other trades as well as in the heavy habitual-migrant crafts) frequently retained union membership in locals outside the area tended to substantiate this expectation.

Augusta leaders, however, pointed out that many people connected with Camp Gordon had stayed on after the war. A Barnwell official stressed the unusual length of SRP construction relative to other construction jobs; "probably most construction workers, not used to such long assignments, don't think so now," he said, but "3 years is a long time, many people will like the place, maybe marry, get integrated, and, if jobs are available, will stay." Another Barnwell leader based his expectation that a considerable part of the current population increase would be permanent on the probability that a substantial number of the permanent force would be drawn from personnel already on the project. He emphasized that a certain amount of construction and maintenance work goes on long after major facilities are completed on all such projects—a point similarly made by one of the Aiken union officials. Most Aiken residents wanted to avoid any change in the town's traditional atmosphere and hoped to limit permanent expansion to SRP executive personnel. But other Aiken sources were convinced that, as SRP construction tapered off, new industry would inevitably be attracted to Aiken as well as to the rest of the area.

²⁴ Plans in November called for one road through the project, but this might eventually be closed too.

IV—Community Facilities and Social Changes

Schools were crowded in November 1951, and water, sewage, and other community facilities were heavily loaded in the Savannah River Plant (SRP) communities,²⁵ regardless of size: the larger communities, although having more extensive facilities, had absorbed major population increases; the smaller towns had more limited facilities with which to meet the needs of even small population additions. But expected social problems had not been encountered, and piecemeal actions to meet particular needs as they arose had made it possible to absorb, without major dislocations, the more than 10,000 SRP in-migrant workers and those family members accompanying them. The fact that problems had not yet "lived up to expectations" was attributed by some observers to the SRP hiring delay (see Part I—Manpower and Wages, p. 3). Serious dislocations were expected when the construction force again rose sharply and as the proportion of in-migrant workers increased. Yet local leaders repeatedly commented that "you just can't tell what people will decide to do."

Planning for broad expansion of facilities was considerable throughout 1951, particularly in Barnwell and Augusta, where long-term development and industrialization were being promoted. Most of the plans, however, depended on special Federal aid to defense communities over and above established Federal assistance to the States—and such aid proved disappointingly small when finally authorized in the fall of the year. Programs were being adjusted accordingly, at the time of this study.

Being designed to meet the immediate and future needs of project personnel only, most of the SRP-incurred expansion was not expected to improve existing conditions. Nevertheless, some long-term improvement would inevitably result, local sources pointed out, either because additions were permanent by nature (whether intended to

meet temporary or permanent needs) or because they were better than facilities previously in use. In the larger communities, emphasis was placed on construction of permanent rather than temporary facilities, including housing as noted previously. Further, leaders in both Aiken and Augusta anticipated that the newcomers would make important contributions socially and culturally as well as through added business. In contrast, some observers anticipated that the smaller towns would have little but a transitory business expansion to compensate for the "headaches" of a large-scale influx occurring chiefly during the period of temporary housing availability (see p. 29.)

Community Facilities

Individual evaluations varied widely on the current, as well as pre-project, status of community facilities—depending, apparently, on the individual's viewpoint on Federal aid, long-term development, the urgency of any existing substandard conditions, and other such factors. Furthermore, since difficulties had not been as severe by November 1951 as had been predicted, some sources concluded that the problem had been altogether exaggerated; they judged the adequacy of existing facilities accordingly, even though the SRP construction force was far from peak size. One Aiken union official, who had been at the Oak Ridge atomic energy project throughout its construction, was highly critical of AEC's decision against providing a Government town, comparing SRP conditions most unfavorably with those at the Tennessee installation.

AEC testimony before a Congressional committee in March 1951 indicated that preliminary review of existing hospitals, schools, sewage disposal systems, and water supply revealed existing facilities "taxed almost to capacity." Most of the communities were, however, slow to act. An Aiken resident, active in civic affairs, pointed out that the SRP had "come as such a shock," and that AEC in the early days had been unable to give them information on what had been done. (Several others criticized AEC sharply for moving in without any advance

²⁵ Conditions in the site towns of Ellenton and Dunbarton or the "newly grown" communities of Jackson and New Ellenton in general are not covered in this survey.

planning or forewarning.) The "terrible period" immediately after the SRP announcement had provided both Aiken and Augusta with a preview of the possible problems, but the difficulties inherent in planning for future action were enormous.

Planning Problems. Although all community planning for facilities expansion depended on the location of the newcomers, it was impossible to predict with any degree of certainty the size, character, timing, and distribution of total population increases. AEC provided estimates of project manpower totals and the proportion of workers expected to be in-migrants (estimated to be 70 percent at peak); as a basis for planning school and housing expansion, estimates were also made of the probable family breakdown of workers (assuming that 60 percent of construction and a somewhat higher proportion of operations personnel would have families) and the probable total number of persons involved (applying the national average of 3.5 persons per family). The obvious uncertainties inherent in these estimates were augmented by such complications as the in-migrant turn-over rate; the number of in-migrants seeking jobs but not getting them; the question of whether family members other than the head of the household would work; the extent to which workers' needs would be met by expansion of existing businesses rather than by new commercial ventures; and, for Augusta primarily and the others indirectly, the simultaneous expansion of Camp Gordon, the Augusta Arsenal, and Veterans Administration hospital facilities. (Local attitudes toward the SRP in particular and long-term development in general also helped to shape local expectations regarding population inflow as well as community planning.)

Demonstrating the uncertainties of the situation was the fact that estimates of the total influx at peak construction ranged from under 60,000 to over 180,000. (These forecasts were for the entire SRP area, including nearby Georgia and South Carolina counties less immediately affected than the four referred to in this article; total 1950 population of this area was less than 400,000.) The 180,000 was a preliminary estimate prepared by the Federal Security Agency (FSA) in connection with a quick survey of local facilities, existing and

needed, made at the request of AEC in February 1951. SRP hiring had barely started; housing plans were not definite; and much of the information on community facilities was of necessity based on material furnished by local officials. Therefore, when the report was submitted to Congress at that time, FSA labeled it preliminary, with estimates subject to revision. It nevertheless received wide publicity in the SRP area and was extensively used in ensuing months by community officials, most of whom were convinced by November 1951 that the estimates were too high.

Lack of comprehensive and accurate information on the capacity of existing facilities was a further complication in planning. Moreover, an extremely limited number of specialists trained in community affairs was available in the area to plan or take action. As one observer pointed out, in a small town the mayor was a businessman accustomed to putting in perhaps a morning a week on city affairs, and city council members were also untrained in these fields; if the council finally reached a decision, there was no one to carry it out. Financing was also a serious problem for all the communities, large and small. The bonded indebtedness of Richmond County, for example, had already reached its legal limit, according to local sources.

Help in assessing particular facilities and drawing up requests for Federal aid was provided by such FSA agencies as the Office of Education and the Public Health Service. Beginning in March 1951, the National Production Authority (NPA) maintained local offices in the area to review requests for priorities, such as for structural steel for Richmond County schools and steel pipe for water connections in Aiken; in June, NPA sent an experienced construction engineer to the area to study needs for priorities in the community program. The Housing and Home Finance Agency (HHFA) advanced interest-free loans for planning a hospital in Barnwell and additions to North Augusta schools and Aiken water supplies. Several of the communities hired private engineering firms as consultants to survey and recommend action. In addition, Augusta had a planning commissioner, hired before the project announcement. Barnwell employed a planning director early in 1951, who resigned, however, at the end of the year, and had not been replaced by mid-1952.

Coordination of planning was difficult—both

within and between communities. Administrative responsibility was divided between municipal, county, and State authorities. In Augusta, for example, city officials were responsible for water and sewerage, roads, police, and recreation; the hospital was owned by the city but run by a separate authority; the county operated the schools. The head of the city's planning commission, in describing it to a reporter in October 1951, attributed its progress to a system he said was unique: the mayor and the chairman of the county commission served on the planning board as voting members, correlating city and county plans and activities. City-county cooperation was good, he said, although at the time of this survey instances of "jockeying for position" between officials at different levels were cited, in some fields, as increasing the difficulties of planning and acting. Further, no single area agency existed to plan for the increased social load, AEC being restricted to supplying information and cooperating in programs of local origin. (On July 1, 1952, the Office of Defense Mobilization designated a local representative to coordinate Federal activities relating to housing and community facilities and services in the area.)

South Carolina leaders had also organized the Western Carolina Council in the early summer of 1951, made up of representatives from cities and towns in eight counties within a 50-mile radius of the project. Established somewhat as a chamber of commerce for the area, the Council planned to work for civic, economic, and social welfare and to provide a forum for combined efforts. At a public meeting held by the Council in Aiken in mid-November, the chairman reported that action taken so far had consisted mainly of several meetings, at which information had been exchanged and a better understanding of mutual problems had been attained. A committee on welfare—first of a number planned on all types of problems—had recently been established, with representatives from each county and city. In addition, the Council secretary had written numerous letters to members of Congress and other authorities on the need for Federal aid.

The possibility of special Federal aid, perhaps the major factor slowing local action, influenced all planning, and much of the initial activity of community leaders was concentrated on esti-

imating needs for such aid. In spite of AEC's repeated statement that provision of facilities for project workers would be left to the communities, the general tendency throughout the area was to assume that extensive Federal aid would be forthcoming. Local and South Carolina State officials pointed out that they had not asked for the project, nor even been consulted about it, and therefore the Government was responsible for providing funds to handle the problems created thereby. Some communities even hoped for sufficient Federal aid to make improvements already needed before the SRP announcement. In one town, for example, construction of a badly needed Negro school was delayed in the hope that it might be financed with Federal funds.

Existing Federal assistance, designed for long-term development, was largely limited to the interest-free loans by the HHFA for planning community facilities and some aid for school and hospital expansion. However, local expectations were buttressed by Congressional consideration of the draft Defense Housing and Community Facilities and Services Act and by the recommendations for extensive aid made by Federal agencies and community leaders at hearings held in Washington and locally during the first several months of 1951. Aid finally authorized under the Act (see discussion on page 25) was limited largely to water supply and sewerage and refuse disposal facilities. (Some provision was made for fire and police protection, and streets and roads, but hospitals and health centers, recreation facilities, and day-care centers were excluded.) Total funds appropriated for defense areas throughout the country were "not enough for the project area alone, even if we could get the whole appropriation," according to community leaders.²⁶ One municipal official pointed out that if it had been understood in the very beginning that no Federal aid would be provided, "things would have been a lot better." So far, he said, forecasts by Federal agencies—as to the rate and size of in-migration, needs, and erection of the various temporary structures—had been wide of the mark, and "there has not been one penny of Federal money spent in the area except on salaries and expenses of Federal investigators and surveyors."

²⁶ Congress initially appropriated \$15,250,000, of which \$4 million was allocated to FSA and the remainder to HHFA. Early in March 1952, FSA announced that about half of the \$4 million would go to the SRP communities.

As Congressional action was delayed throughout the summer and it became apparent that little aid would be authorized, community leaders began to re-assess their plans in terms of what could be accomplished with local and State resources, supplemented by the limited Federal aid already available. Re-evaluation was also being made in the light of population increases to date. Various comments in November 1951 suggested that the extent of Federal responsibility, particularly for temporary expansion, was still not clear. Some observers continued to predict that action would come for the most part only in response to practical and immediate needs arising in the course of the following few years. But others said that the communities were now alert to the problems and ready to act.

Municipal Services. All of the communities had programs for expanding water and sewage systems in November 1951, to be financed partly by themselves and partly by Federal funds, and most had begun to put these programs into effect. Enactment of the defense housing legislation had given impetus to community action not only because of the new Federal aid but also because adequate basic facilities were required for the HHFA-programmed housing construction (see discussion in Part III, p. 25). Facilities for this housing (which did not depend on the new Federal aid but were to be financed locally) were expected to be ready by the time the first units were completed, sometime in the spring of 1952. Although the Federal funds, available for subsequent expansion, were limited, one Federal authority in the area figured they would be adequate to meet the most urgent needs—primarily water. Application forms and regulations for submitting requests for Federal aid were not available in November. By mid-1952, some \$5 million of Federal assistance was reported to have been approved by the HHFA and the FSA for water- and sewer-facility projects in SRP communities (at an estimated total cost of nearly \$10 million).

The concentration of SRP workers made the water problem most acute in Augusta, North Augusta, Aiken, and Barnwell at the time of this survey. For most SRP communities, the water problem was one of expanding treatment, pumping, storage, and distribution facilities. North

Augusta, however, was also without an adequate water supply. Its water came from springs which reportedly did not provide a sufficient volume during the dry periods (at which time water was obtained via a pipe line from Augusta), and development of a new water supply from the Savannah River was needed. A North Augusta businessman said the town was ready to go ahead with a complete revamping of the waterworks when the project was announced and they had to "scrap" the original plans. In November 1951, town plans were once more complete, and the town was awaiting defense housing funds (to cover the cost above that originally planned) in order to go ahead.

Both Barnwell and Aiken had employed consulting engineering firms early in 1951 to recommend needed improvements in their water and sewage facilities, and a similar survey was under way in Augusta in the fall. Augusta officials indicated that the basic waterworks were sufficiently modern to be adequate and that fortunately an extensive and long-needed program of overhauling the water system had been initiated prior to the project's announcement. Currently, they were adding the necessary extensions to service new sections, and the main problem noted by city officials was the shortage of materials, notably pipe; the NPA office in Augusta had helped a great deal in meeting such needs, however. Aiken and Barnwell had also laid large amounts of pipe, extending water lines to new housing. Trailer parks and some of the new construction outside city limits were served by wells.

Most of the communities used septic tanks for new construction during 1951. The South Carolina communities, including Aiken and its suburbs, already had a certain number of pit privies and individual septic tank systems in addition to whatever type of city sewage system was in use. Augusta officials early in 1951 described their system as in a deplorable condition, with mains too small, the city inadequately covered, much of the system in bad repair, and no sewage treatment plant (sewage from Augusta being discharged untreated into the river). Barnwell, too, reportedly had inadequate facilities for the existing population at that time, and Williston had no sewer system at all, using pit privies and septic tanks exclusively. The systems in the other

towns were regarded as adequate for the pre-project population, although an Allendale real estate man said in November 1951 that their sewer system was "just no good" and that the town had therefore applied for Federal aid.

Use of wells and septic tanks in the same areas initially caused some concern, but the wells had to be sunk so deep to get water that contamination was unlikely. While sewage facilities were over-taxed, Williston had the one situation particularly noted as dangerous in November 1951. Not only did the town lack a sewer system but also the houses were crowded together, making the use of septic tanks unsafe, according to one observer. New construction had aggravated a situation already bad, he said, and health officials feared the possibility of a typhus epidemic. He commented incidentally that, if expansion forced the town to do something about its long-standing sewage problem, the SRP would have produced a change of permanent benefit.

Most of the trailers in the area were reported to have their own plumbing facilities, connected to the trailer park sewage systems. The parks were subject to regulation, in Georgia as well as in South Carolina where the bulk of the project workers' trailers were located. SRP officials stated that there had been virtually no complaints on trailer sanitation at the time of this survey. In their opinion, the assistance given by the Trailer Coach Manufacturers Association representative to local people in setting up the trailer courts had been a major factor in this regard.

Other municipal services requiring expansion included police and fire departments (equipment and personnel), street lights, street paving and repair, garbage collection, and recreation; most of the South Carolina towns lacked such basic regulatory controls as housing or building codes, or zoning ordinances. Scattered additions were made in these fields by the various communities throughout the period under review, as needs became pressing. For example, North Augusta as of August 1951 had a building and fire prevention code, a third policeman and second police car authorized, and a new garbage truck.

Some of the other communities had also expanded their police forces, and, in October 1951, the press announced that the SRP area would be assigned perhaps 300 or more special State con-

stables for 2 years. Crime had not increased particularly, according to local reports, but the number of traffic violations and accidents had soared throughout the area. For instance, the Augusta police chief stated in October 1951 that arrests for drunken driving, speeding, and accidents had passed the 1950 total in only the first 8 months of 1951. Traffic was repeatedly cited as one of the most critical community problems—in terms of roads, parking, and congestion, as well as accidents.

Community-sponsored recreation was extremely limited in the SRP area. A field representative of the National Recreation Association was working with the communities on developing well-rounded recreation programs, and some action had been taken by November. Aiken, for example, had doubled its recreation budget, although this was insufficient for normal needs.

But little had been done to provide recreation for the large number of temporary construction workers. Movies appeared to be the chief amusement available in November 1951, and they were regularly crowded, particularly the outdoor drive-ins, of which several new ones had gone up since the SRP began. Augusta's clubs were also said to be much frequented, and numerous small drinking and eating places had been rapidly constructed to serve the SRP force. Du Pont had some company-sponsored recreational programs (basketball, softball, and bowling leagues, and dances), it was reported, but in November 1951 the company was not planning anything comprehensive for the construction workers.

In early July 1952, the HHFA reported that the shortage of recreation facilities was "a principal unsolved problem at this time." Indoor and outdoor recreational facilities at the dormitories and trailer camps accordingly were being planned. Du Pont also had received AEC approval for the operation of three recreation areas on the site near the plant boundary lines.

Schools. Increases in school enrollments between January 1951 and January 1952 ranged from 4 percent (80 pupils) in the Allendale school district to 69 percent (622 pupils) in the Williston school district,²⁷ according to information ob-

²⁷ Barnwell County's three school districts were Barnwell, Williston, and Blackville; Allendale County's were Allendale and Fairfax; Aiken had nine, of which Aiken, North Augusta, and Ellenton were the main districts affected by the SRP; Richmond County was a consolidated school district.

tained since this survey. (Numerical increases were, of course, greater in some of the other districts.) New enrollments in November 1951 were somewhat smaller in number and, as in other fields, fewer than had been anticipated. Nevertheless, existing classrooms were crowded, and in some Barnwell County schools—reportedly the “hardest hit” in the area—double shifts were necessary. All the counties had employed additional teachers—too many in some counties without additional buildings, according to local observers.

Schools had already been operating with maximum enrollments before major SRP hiring began, according to the FSA survey in early 1951. Several classrooms in each of the four counties referred to in this article were makeshift and, in some instances, hazardous to the welfare of the children. Aiken had more classrooms at that time than any of the other counties; enrollments were also far greater except for Richmond County which, in spite of fewer classrooms, had even more pupils than Aiken. Richmond County had a 2-year school construction program already under way, scheduled to be largely completed in the fall of 1951. Local residents stated, however, that this program had been initiated mainly because of the recent court decisions upholding the States’ right to maintain segregated schools but requiring equalization of facilities (SRP in-migration was expected to affect white schools almost exclusively). In any case, local authorities stressed that this construction had been scheduled to provide only for a normal growth.²⁸ Many of the school districts in the area were heavily pressed as far as teacher-pupil ratio was concerned,²⁹ and, according to some local authorities, many teachers had less than the desirable professional qualifications.

Since SRP hiring did not start until over half the 1950–51 school year had been completed, timing created fewer problems in planning school facilities than in other fields, but again the extent of the increased load was difficult to predict. Added to the basic uncertainties as to size and distribution

of population increases were questions concerning the families brought in by workers: number of school-age children; level of schooling required; applicability of the 0.7 national average of school children per family to a large migrant construction force;³⁰ and the possibility that workers arriving after the start of the school year would leave their children in school in the communities from which they came. Also children of site residents moving into nearby communities would swell enrollments somewhat, particularly in Negro schools.

Some Federal assistance was available for school construction under legislation enacted before the current emergency period. In June 1951, Congress authorized the Commissioner of Education to set aside from existing appropriations the funds necessary to provide school facilities in areas declared critical by the President,³¹ and, on the basis of the SRP manning schedule and estimates of anticipated housing (including temporary), the Office of Education and local school authorities worked out a program for the area. Federal aid granted could be used either for permanent or temporary school structures. Richmond County elected to use funds placed at its disposal (because of Camp Gordon as well as the SRP) only for enlargement of permanent school structures, certifying that such construction would meet temporary as well as permanent needs. Aiken and Barnwell Counties claimed funds for both permanent and temporary school buildings, and Allendale planned only temporary structures.

A total of 187 temporary classrooms accordingly were scheduled to be put up in the three counties for the academic year 1951–52, the largest allocations being made to Aiken and North Augusta. Invitations to bid for the supply and erection of the temporary buildings had not been distributed by November 1951, however. Some observers still expected that the buildings might be available for use early in 1952, but one local authority pointed out that use of demountables did not mean simply setting up a quonset and “running the children into it.” Although the metal walls could be put up and taken down readily, he said, wiring, plumbing, toilets, heating, and so on had

²⁸ Both South Carolina and Georgia were greatly increasing State educational outlays in 1951, which would benefit SRP operations personnel but were not expected to help solve the problems of the SRP construction period.

²⁹ According to a community resources survey by an engineering firm engaged by Du Pont, the ratio in the white schools in the six main nonsite South Carolina towns ranged from 1:27.1 in Barnwell to 1:41.2 in Aiken and 1:41.6 in North Augusta.

³⁰ Trailer surveys in the summer of 1951 suggested that the average was considerably lower, and the Office of Education permitted use of a figure no higher than 0.5 in applying for Federal aid.

³¹ Amendments providing for more extensive Federal aid to schools were “pocket-vetoed” by the President late in 1951.

to be installed and had to meet certain standards. Little information was available as to whether Augusta school construction was on schedule, and none of the federally aided permanent construction had been started in Aiken or Barnwell, although Aiken had obtained some land.

Increased enrollments affected conditions in the various school districts unevenly, reflecting the pre-project size and school capacity of the community as well as the actual size of the increase. Aiken had a numerically greater increase than did Barnwell, but the secretary of the Aiken Chamber of Commerce indicated that in general school facilities had proved adequate so far. In contrast, some Barnwell schools were not only operating on a double shift but classes were being held in churches, the Masonic temple, etc.; at the same time, the number of teachers recruited had been based on the assumption that temporary family housing would be available in the fall. Teachers must be hired for a full school term, and all those newly hired would be needed if, before the end of the current term, an influx of pupils materialized in the numbers originally anticipated. Otherwise, according to a local official, fewer additions would have been adequate, and the added outlay for salaries represented an unnecessary financial drain, for which funds had been diverted from other needed activities. Some Augusta residents pointed to the new schools completed or under construction and, while admitting that existing schools were crowded, were confident that no serious difficulties would occur. Others maintained that Augusta schools were "overflowing," cited examples of unsafe schools and classes held in buildings other than schools, and doubted whether the new schools, even when completed, would be adequate.

The temporary buildings, once erected, were expected to be sufficient for project-connected children (as well as those of former site residents in these communities), provided employment schedules were not changed (see discussion on p. 3) and Richmond County's permanent school construction program was successfully carried out. By mid-1952, 37 temporary school rooms had been completed in Aiken County (15 classrooms at Jackson; 8 at North Augusta and 12 others in the North Augusta school district; and 2 for Negro pupils at New Ellenton) and 5 in

Allendale County (Fairfax); 32 had been completed but not yet accepted by school officials in Barnwell County (15 classrooms for white and 7 for Negro students at Williston and 10 for Negro children at Barnwell).

Queried on the long-run effect of the project, several observers commented that the demountables, while regarded as temporary, would be superior to some local structures which had outside toilets and no central heating or hot water. If the demountables were not taken down after the construction period, they might actually constitute some net improvement of school facilities for the area. School standards, professional qualifications of teachers, and so on continued to occasion some concern, both for the current period and over the long run. An Aiken resident, commenting that a large proportion of the teachers were new, said that many were young people "just out of school" and inexperienced in handling students sometimes little younger than themselves.

Hospitals. Additional beds had been made available in Aiken and Augusta hospitals to meet increased population needs as of November 1951, but it was generally conceded that the main pressure from SRP in-migration was yet to come. Pre-project plans for substantial hospital expansion in Augusta, already the area's medical center, were revised somewhat after the SRP announcement, and plans were drawn for a small hospital in Barnwell County, which had no hospital. When provisions for hospital aid were eliminated from the defense housing legislation at the last minute, local officials urged AEC financing for planned hospital expansion. Project officials, however, continued to regard this as a local responsibility. Further, various authorities in the area still disagreed in November 1951 on both the extent of the need and the best way of increasing capacity.

The costly and lengthy nature of hospital construction, and the difficulties of obtaining additional physicians and nurses made existing facilities and plans already in progress particularly important in this field. Augusta's University Hospital was the only large hospital in the immediate SRP area,³² and one observer noted that it was virtually the only one with an adequate staff of doctors (nurses, a critical occupation nationally,

³² Two Veterans Administration hospitals were also located in Augusta.

were in short supply in all of the hospitals). Described as old and in need of remodeling and renovation, it had some 475 beds and a high occupancy rate at the time of the FSA survey; a 200-bed addition to the hospital had been planned before the SRP. A new 100-bed hospital was already under construction at that time, scheduled to be completed in the spring of 1952; it was being constructed with Federal assistance granted under the Hospital Survey and Construction Act (Hill-Burton), designed to assist long-range State plans and requiring substantial local contributions. In addition, the Georgia State Legislature had authorized the sale of bonds for construction of a 750-bed State teaching hospital in Augusta.

The University Hospital had many South Carolina patients because of its proximity and the lack of comparable staff or facilities in the South Carolina counties. So-called "problem cases" in Aiken County, for example, were sent to Augusta.³³ With a recent addition constructed with the aid of Hill-Burton funds, Aiken County General Hospital (that county's only hospital) had approximately 150 beds at the time of the SRP announcement, but a number were not then in use, reportedly because of the shortage of nurses. Allendale General Hospital had 27 beds, generally regarded as adequate to meet SRP-incurred needs.³³

By converting private rooms to semiprivate, approximately 100 beds had been added to the University Hospital as of November 1951. At a series of fall 1951 meetings, project and Federal and State health officials discussed the desirability as well as the financing of revised plans for expansion of the hospital. Attention was called to the nonavailability of steel for hospital construction, the possibility that extra beds or additions which would use existing central facilities might be sufficient to meet temporary needs, and the importance of avoiding construction of facilities which might be superfluous after the SRP construction period. According to recent information, a Hill-Burton project for approximately \$1 million for renovating and improving University Hospital was approved early in 1952. No new beds were to be added, however; neither State nor Federal Public Health officials would

approve financial aid for expanding the hospital because of the new State Hospital. (A Federal grant also had been urged for the latter—to cover the added costs of accelerating its construction and thereby make it available for part of the SRP construction period; with no such aid authorized, the hospital was not scheduled for completion in less than 3 to 4 years.)

The extra beds in the Aiken hospital had been put in use by mid-1951, and in November consideration was given to opening up an unfinished floor (with a 30-bed capacity) in the pre-project addition. A local leader, interviewed at that time, said that this floor could presumably take care of the added population but that the additional staff required would be very difficult to get. Another Aiken resident, active in hospital work, commented that lack of nurses had already forced them to employ untrained aides.

Apart from hospital capacity, health departments in the counties affected were generally described as understaffed and short of money.

Commercial Facilities. Many new businesses came into the SRP area during the period under review, and sales expanded rapidly. Numerous corner grocery stores, filling stations, drug stores, and other small enterprises had opened up, as well as the new drive-in theaters, super-markets, restaurants, and "beer joints," already cited. With one or two exceptions, however, all sources agreed that the major portion of business expansion had been by existing local firms. Some people attributed this to resistance of local interests to entrance of new enterprises until existing firms had all the business they could handle; others pointed out the temporary nature of SRP demand and the shortage of construction materials. New commercial construction had been limited, and a long-time Augusta resident cited examples of local firms expanding into adjacent buildings or converting old houses to stores.

Some of this expansion had occurred in the South Carolina communities, principally in Aiken. But the principal expansion was in Augusta, commercial center for the whole area. Retail sales jumped 34 percent during the first 5 months of 1951 over the volume in the corresponding period of 1950, and the increase in department store sales was considerably higher than the

³³ Or to Orangeburg County (adjacent to Aiken and Barnwell Counties on the east). This county had a 200-bed general hospital which served five counties, including Barnwell and Allendale, and several small specialty hospitals.

national average. Between the fall of 1950 and a year later, circulation of the two newspapers rose from 54,000 to 73,000, and newsprint tonnage used increased 30 percent because of the new business and increased advertising; airline passenger traffic, airmail, and long distance telephone calls roughly doubled; the local transit company ordered new buses, added routes, and increased schedules; and bank clearings set a new record, the figure for the first 9 months of 1951 exceeding any other year's total clearings.

The SRP's large share in Augusta's expansion was exceeded by the proportion attributed to Camp Gordon's reactivation at that time. The secretary of the Chamber of Commerce pointed out that Augusta was the only town near the Camp; not only did the Camp personnel and their families living in Augusta spend money there, but also families and friends visiting them or ordering things for them locally. In contrast, business from project workers was dispersed among the various SRP towns; in his experience, many project people did not bring their families, at least not immediately, and much of their pay was therefore sent home and did not benefit the area. Recent information indicates, however, that as construction progressed, SRP payrolls became the major factor in Augusta's continuing business boom.

Social Problems and Changes

Both short-run social problems and long-range social and cultural changes were still expected at the time of this survey. The former were anticipated largely in connection with the temporary barracks to be put up in the smaller towns, which had been reduced in number and were relatively little occupied by mid-1952, as noted. The long-range changes were predicted mainly in the communities where the permanent workers were expected to settle, and a variety of local sources indicated in November 1951 that, even at that early date, such changes were becoming evident.

Social Problems. Except for isolated instances, few local residents interviewed in November 1951 had observed any increase in crime, juvenile delinquency, prostitution, or other such social problems—in spite of the large number of people who had already arrived in the area and the general lack of recreation facilities. Lack of

major social problems was attributed by some people to the dispersal of workers' homes among several established communities. Others suggested that, because of Augusta's relatively greater facilities, the concentration of single workers there had tended to minimize the problems or at least had made them less apparent to local residents. Still others, however, pointed out that recreation was a more important problem for single men, and emphasized once more the change in the migrant force to men accompanied by families.

Augusta was frequently described as having "always been a wide-open town" and local residents said that "entertainment on the light side" had increased substantially since the SRP and Camp Gordon expansion. In September 1951, a Superior Court judge in Augusta, commenting favorably on the newly opened "Teen Town" (a center sponsored by the Junior Women's Club), said that "the increasing trend toward crime and law violation by teen-agers" had been brought forcibly to his attention from first-hand observation. Some local officials described "a lot of drunkenness" in Augusta, but several residents said that if crime and drunkenness had increased it "wasn't obvious to the average citizen." Most people contrasted conditions with those during the war, when Augusta was flooded with unattached servicemen from Camp Gordon, and stressed that even with the "double expansion," of the Camp and the SRP, the problems were not as great.

The smaller numbers of single workers in the South Carolina towns, most of whom reportedly went to Augusta for entertainment, had similarly created few new problems, although organized prostitution was reported to have "hit" Aiken in the early fall of 1951 and some sources described a "rather bad situation" in Ellenton and New Ellenton. Local fears concerning trailers had also proved unfounded, according to various observers; they were regarded as unlikely to create future special problems for nearby communities. Emphasis was laid on the fact that trailer migrants "regard their trailers as their homes these days," and also that only the better-paid workers could afford to buy trailers.³⁴

³⁴ Trailers were priced in the area at from about \$1,500 for a used 1-bedroom trailer to some \$5,000 for a new 2-bedroom trailer, with a one-third down-payment required. According to a Trailer Coach Manufacturers Association survey, the annual income of the average trailer resident topped the national average, being over \$4,000 on both the East and West Coasts.

Those South Carolina towns scheduled to have temporary barracks located near them, however, continued to be apprehensive over the arrival of such a large body of single workers. Barnwell officials, for example, with the prospect of "1,500 strangers in town," feared trouble even though the men would probably go to Augusta for amusement. They were reported to have under consideration the barring of construction workers from local events, such as the regular square dances, or, if necessary, the elimination of such activities during the period of major influx. Allendale officials were even more concerned; if the site were closed to traffic, Augusta would be nearly 70 miles around the site from Allendale and the nearest city in the other direction was even farther. One observer said that Allendale was not even attempting to plan, but "just throws up its hands in despair."

Welfare authorities, particularly at the State level, were "definitely awake to the problems" which could arise, according to local observers in November 1951. Welfare activities had already increased substantially in the area. In Augusta, an integrated welfare council had been organized, which had established a community chest organization and had helped such private agencies as the Travelers' Aid and the National Recreation Association to establish themselves and the Red Cross to increase its organization. In the fall, the Augusta YWCA announced plans for an expanded program and representatives of the national Y spent a few days in the area, studying the problems and helping formulate plans; by November classes for women had been started, and a day nursery. The American Social Hygiene Association also sent a representative to Aiken in the early fall, and, at local request, again in November, to discuss the possibility of arranging a leadership training institute in the handling of problems which had developed elsewhere with large groups of migrant workers. The danger of such difficulties arising was also discussed at the Western Carolina Council's November meeting, in connection with the council's new welfare committee.

The churches, numbering over 150 in the Augusta metropolitan area according to the Chamber of Commerce, were also reported to be expanding their activities. A newly appointed area

director for the National Council of Churches had arrived in the area just prior to this survey.

Social and Cultural Changes. One Augusta "old-timer" was voluble on how "the place is full of strangers . . . You have to wait in line for movies . . . The town even looks different."; similar comments were frequently quoted. Most community leaders interviewed, however, indicated that the temporary construction workers had been accommodated without noticeable friction, although they were not "a part of the community" to any great degree. Workers living in trailers outside Aiken, for example, came in to town to market but otherwise were fairly self-sufficient in their trailer communities. In the opinion of some observers, those workers who lived in rooms also regarded themselves as too transient to be interested in local affairs and tended to mix largely with other SRP workers.

Permanent AEC and Du Pont operations staff, on the other hand, residing chiefly in Aiken and Augusta, were repeatedly described as having become remarkably well integrated. Both SRP and local residents remarked that at first the Aiken people resented the newcomers, but gradually they had been accepted and by November were "pretty well assimilated." Many were even active in community affairs.

Aiken and Augusta leaders consistently emphasized that they expected these new permanent residents to make a large social and cultural contribution. The head of the Augusta YWCA pointed out, for example, that some of the newly arrived SRP women had worked in the Community Chest drive, and that benefit thus had been derived from other communities' experience in such activities. The concert organization in Aiken had more members than ever before, making possible a "bigger and better" concert program. Formation of Aiken chapters of the American Association of University Women and League of Women Voters was also under discussion. A major reason given for the SRP women's desire to form a League chapter quickly was their discovery that they would be ineligible to vote in the 1952 Presidential election; South Carolina required 2 years' residence to establish the right to vote, in contrast to the 1-year requirement in Georgia and elsewhere. The group mentioned wanted to work for a change in the law, according to local sources, and, even

though that was impossible before the coming election, to make their opinions heard.

Several persons interviewed also expected the newcomers to have a "healthy" effect on local politics. More than one Augusta resident pointed out that the incoming people had different ideas, were not committed to local parties, and would have the right to vote after a year's residence. They were a sizable enough group, these residents suggested, to "worry" the local politicians, who might modify existing policies to gain their support. This was a particularly opportune moment for any such change, it was pointed out, since one of the two major parties in Augusta (both being wings of the Democratic Party) had split in the fall 1951 mayoralty election, and party lines and policies were in process of being reshaped.

All the new ideas and experience which the newcomers brought to the area and the mingling of people from all over the country would also eventually produce a change in local attitudes, most

sources agreed. Augusta's new interest in welfare was largely attributed to the new residents, and Augusta officials were being "stirred up" and made aware of inadequate conditions, according to some people. The new arrivals could not vote yet, but they could talk, write letters, and otherwise exert pressure and make the needs clear.

Again it was emphasized that such effects had not yet been fully felt. Less than a year had elapsed since the SRP announcement; many SRP personnel did not bring their wives and families immediately; and the temporary expansion had not reached its peak. Many local residents continued, of course, to view the question of change in terms of a "3-year temporary disruption" and to expect a return to the "status quo" when the construction workers departed. Most local leaders interviewed on this subject, however, seemed to share the opinion of the Barnwell official, who said: "You can't bring several thousand people to a town of under 2,000 and not have change."

